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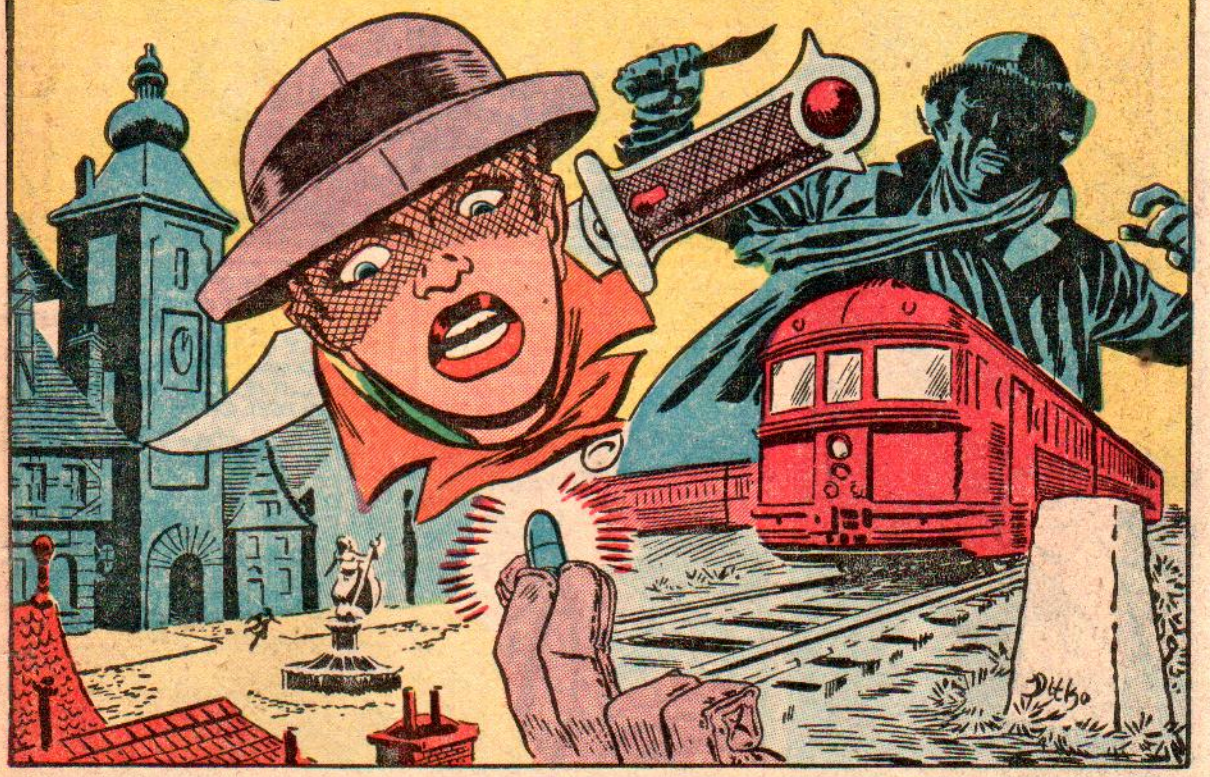
THE TINY VIAL CONTAINED THE MOST DEADLY PLAGUE GERMS KNOWN TO SCIENCE...ENOUGH, IN THAT ONE LITTLE VIAL TO DESTROY LIFE WITHIN A RADIUS OF A THOUSAND MILES! THE WOMAN KNOWN AS MAGDA TONESCU WAS WILLING TO GAMBLE HER LIFE FOR THE TWO-MILLION DOLLARS OFFERED FOR THE VIAL; AND THAT WAS WHY SHE WAS ABOARD THE NOTORIOUS TRANS-EUROPE EXPRESS; SWEATING OUT...

THE PAYOFF!

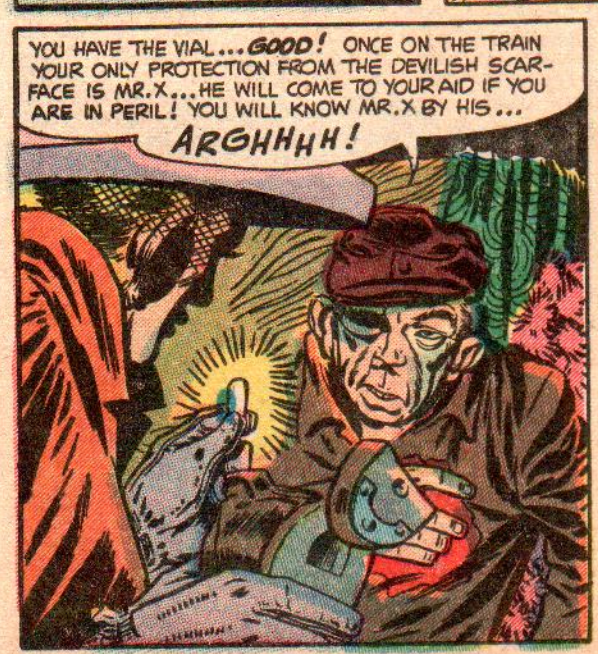


THERE'S A SURGEON IN THIS BUILDING! I'LL RUN AND GET...
NO TIME, MAGDA ...I'M DONE FOR, ANYWAY! YOU'LL HAVE TO CARRY ON ALONE AND... UNGHHH!

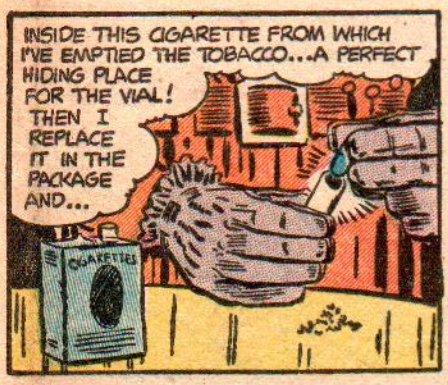
BUT THE MAN TO WHOM THE VIAL IS TO BE DELIVERED...I DON'T KNOW HIS IDENTITY!
LISTEN CLOSELY, MAGDA ...THERE ARE ONLY A FEW MOMENTS OF LIFE LEFT TO ME!

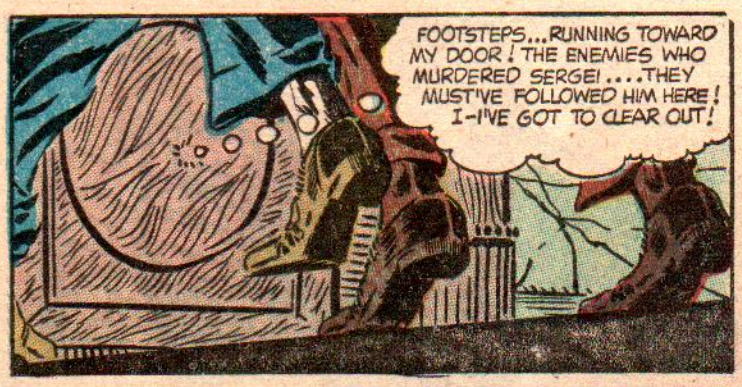
TONIGHT, ON THE TRANS-EUROPE EXPRESS, YOU WILL GIVE THE VIAL TO OUR MR. X ...IN EXCHANG FOR TWO-MILLION DOLLARS IN GOLD! ABOARD THE SAME TRAIN, I HAVE LEARNED, WILL BE THE DREADED AGENT OF THE ENEMY..

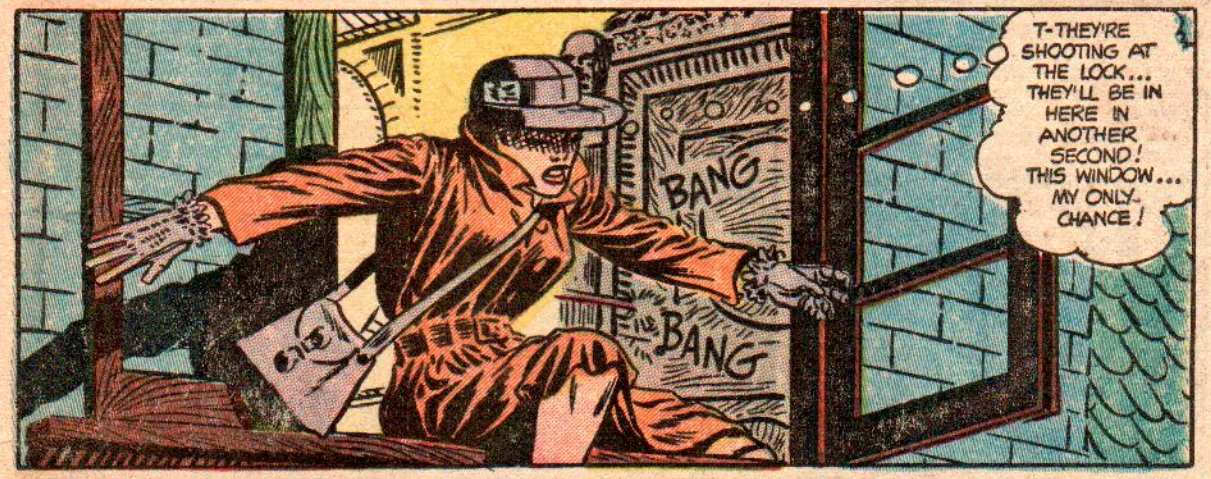
...ALL I KNOW OF THIS RUTHLESS KILLER IS THAT HIS FACE IS HORRIBLY SCARRED...AND THAT HE WILL STOP AT NOTHING TO GET HIS CURSED HANDS ON THE VIAL! HURRY...IT IS HIDDEN IN THE HOLLOW HEEL OF MY SHOE!

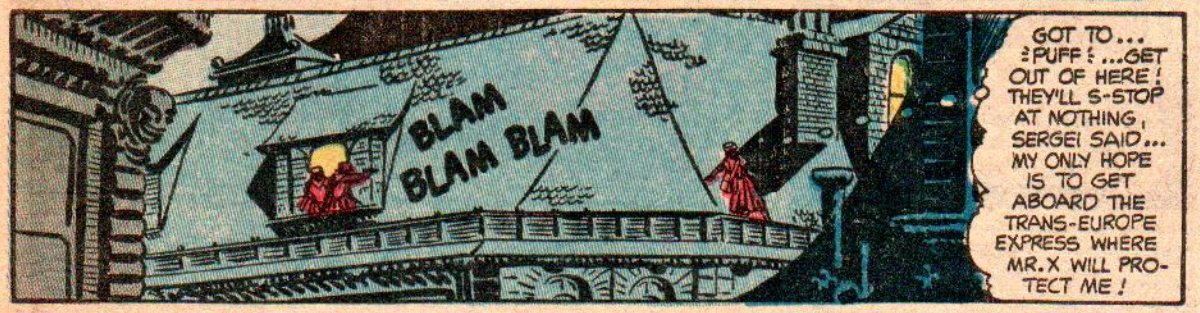

YOU HAVE THE VIAL...GOOD! ONCE ON THE TRAIN YOUR ONLY PROTECTION FROM THE DEVILISH SCAR-FACE IS MR. X...HE WILL COME TO YOUR AID IF YOU ARE IN PERIL! YOU WILL KNOW MR. X BY HIS...
ARGHHHH!

SERGE!...HE...HE IS DEAD, AND...AND I KNOW NOTHING OF WHAT THIS MR. X LOOKS LIKE! THERE IS NO T-TIME TO LOSE...I MUST FIND A HIDING PLACE FOR THIS VIAL!


INSIDE THIS CIGARETTE FROM WHICH I'VE EMPTIED THE TOBACCO...A PERFECT HIDING PLACE FOR THE VIAL! THEN I REPLACE IT IN THE PACKAGE AND...
CIGARETTES

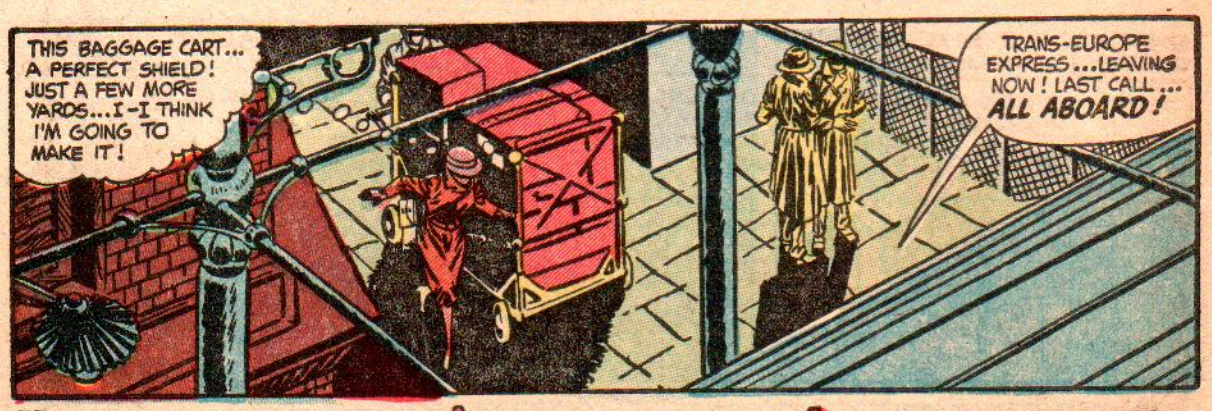

FOOTSTEPS...RUNNING TOWARD MY DOOR! THE ENEMIES WHO MURDERED SERGE! ....THEY MUST'VE FOLLOWED HIM HERE! I-I'VE GOT TO CLEAR OUT!


BANG
BANG
T-THEY'RE SHOOTING AT THE LOCK... THEY'LL BE IN HERE IN ANOTHER SECOND! THIS WINDOW... MY ONLY CHANCE!


BLAM
BLAM BLAM
GOT TO... PUFF ...GET OUT OF HERE! THEY'LL S-STOP AT NOTHING, SERGE! SAID... MY ONLY HOPE IS TO GET ABOARD THE TRANS-EUROPE EXPRESS WHERE MR. X WILL PROTECT ME!

ACROSS THE DARKENED ROOFTOPS THE WOMAN FLED...ZIGZAGING IN AND OUT OF SHADOWS AS HER PURSUERS POUNDED AFTER HER. AT LAST...
T-THANK GOD THERE'S NO MOON TONIGHT...I THINK I'VE LOST THEM FOR THE TIME BEING! GOT TO MAKE A DASH FOR THE RAILROAD TERMINAL! H-HERE GOES...

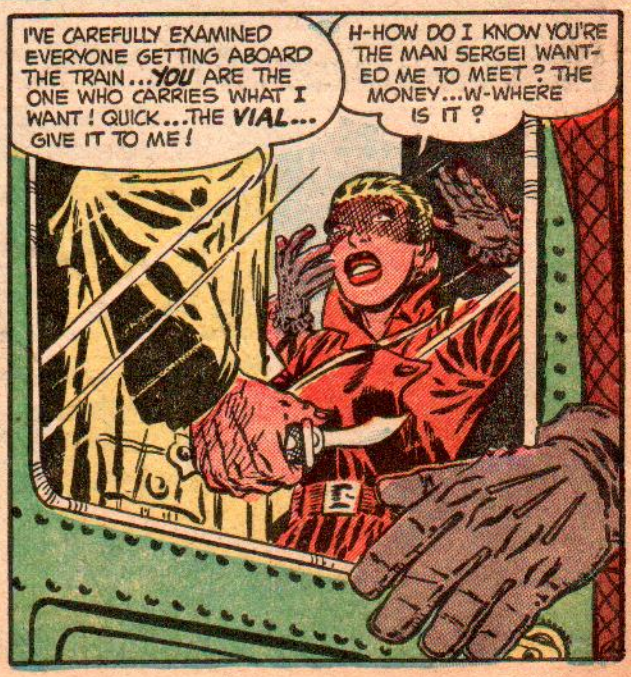
ALL ABOARD! LAST CALL!
T-THE ENEMY AGENTS... THEY'RE ALL OVER THE PLACE! I'VE GOT TO GET ABOARD THAT TRAIN.. BUT HOW? W-WAIT!! OVER THERE...



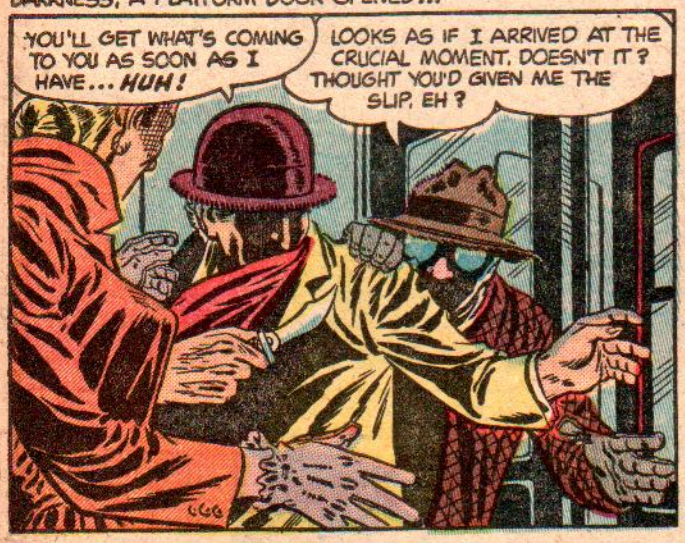
WITH A DEAFENING ROAR, THE TRAIN STARTED TO MOVE. SUDDENLY, A LITHE FIGURE DARTED FORWARD...AND...

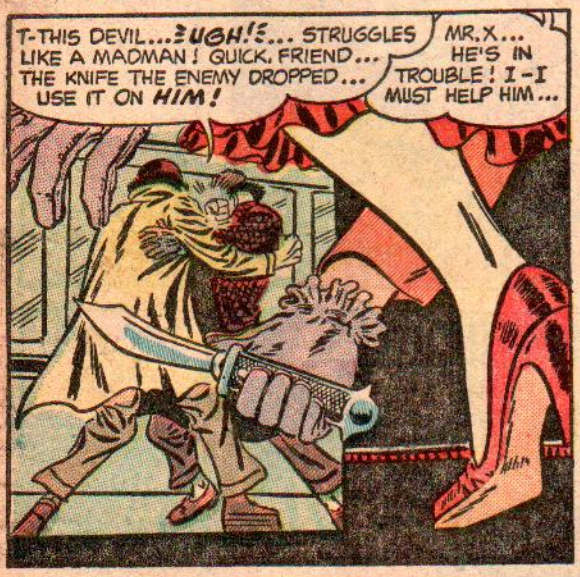
A FUSILADE OF BULLETS CRASHED INTO THE TRAIN, PIERCING METAL AND SHATTERING GLASS. BUT, IN THE SHADOWS OF THE DARK ENTRY PLATFORM...

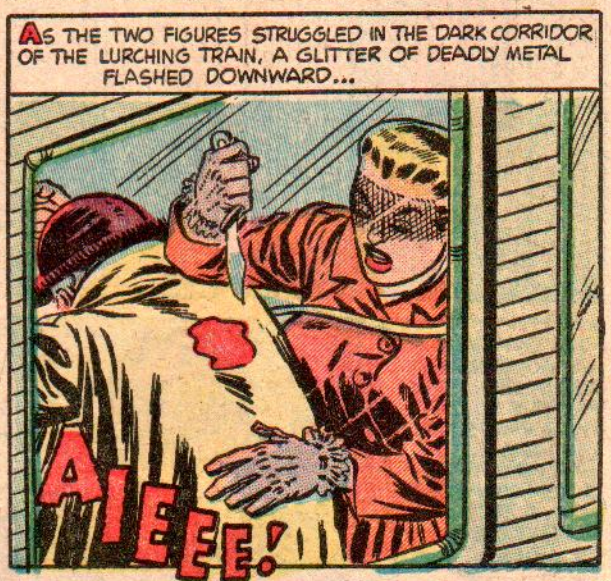
FOR LONG MINUTES MAGDA TONESCU CROUCHED FEARFULLY IN THE DARKNESS. FINALLY, AS THE TRAIN HURTLED THROUGH THE MURKY NIGHT....

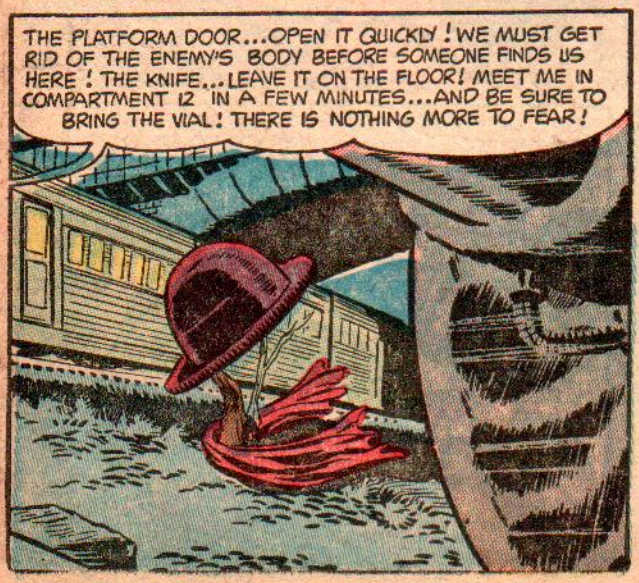


THE DEADLY BLADE INCHED CLOSER. THEN, SUDDENLY, IN THE DEEP DARKNESS, A PLATFORM DOOR OPENED...









WITH THE FEELING OF UTTER DREAD LIFTED, MAGDA TONESCU WAITED FOR A FEW MINUTES. THEN...

COMPARTMENT 10...11...AH! THERE IT IS! A FEW MORE SECONDS AND THIS VIAL WILL BE OFF MY HANDS...AND TWO-MILLION DOLLARS IN GOLD WILL BE IN ITS PLACE!

QUICK...LET ME IN! IT IS THE MESSENGER WITH THE PRICELESS VIAL!

THE DOOR IS UNLOCKED, FRIEND ...JUST PUSH IT OPEN!

12

I TOOK THE PRECAUTION TO HIDE THE VIAL, MR. X...UNTIL I SEE THE GOLD FOR WHICH SERGEI WAS WILLING TO STEAL AND MURDER! NOW IF YOU... WHERE ARE YOU?

RIGHT HERE, DEAR LADY!

THE OFFICIALS OF MY GOVERNMENT ARE DESPERATELY ANXIOUS TO GET THEIR HANDS ON THAT VIAL...ITS WAR POTENTIAL IS INCALCULABLE! NOW, IF YOU'LL HAND IT OVER...

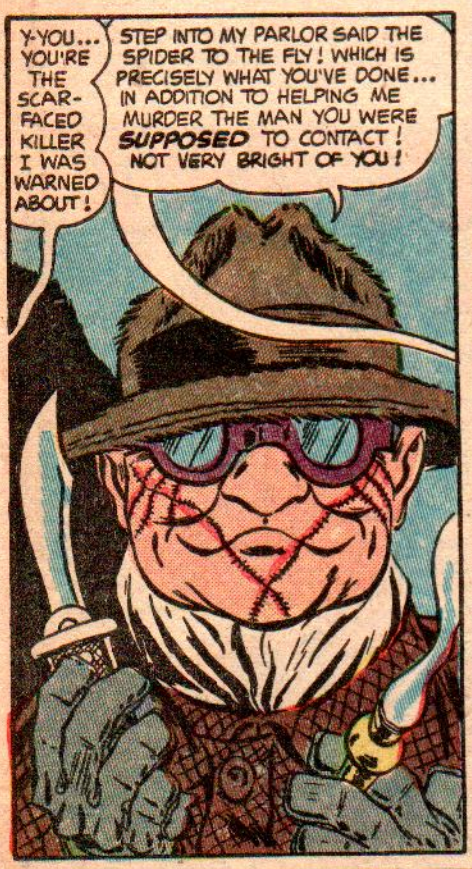
Y-YOU...YOU ARE MR. X, ARE YOU NOT!

I'VE BEEN CALLED MANY THINGS IN MY TIME, MADAME ...BUT THAT IS NEITHER HERE NOR THERE! NOW ...THE VIAL!

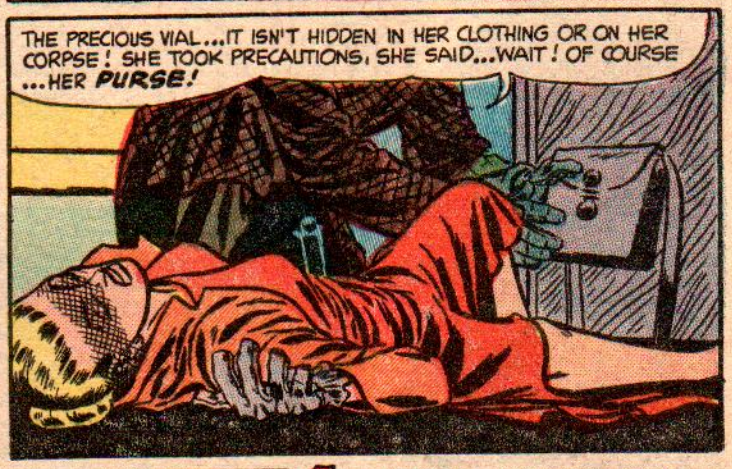
YOU...YOU'RE TRYING TO GET OUT OF PAYING ME THE GOLD THAT WAS PROMISED!

YOU'LL GET WHAT'S COMING TO YOU, LADY...SOON ENOUGH! SCREAMING WILL DO YOU NO GOOD...THIS COMPARTMENT HAS BEEN SPECIALLY SOUND-PROOFED! PLEASE DON'T DILLY-DALLY...I WANT THAT TEST TUBE!

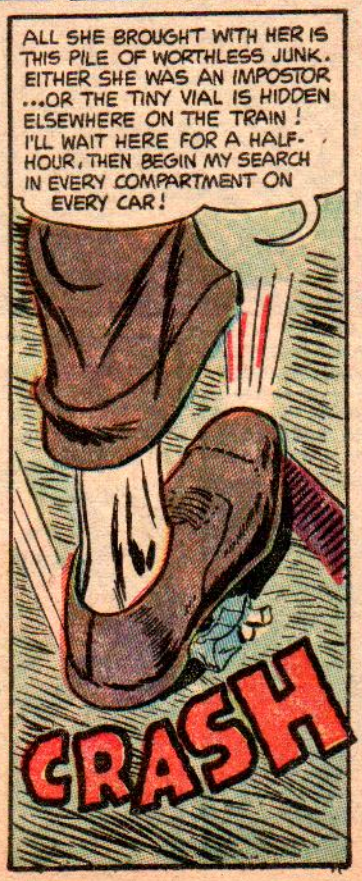
SNAP

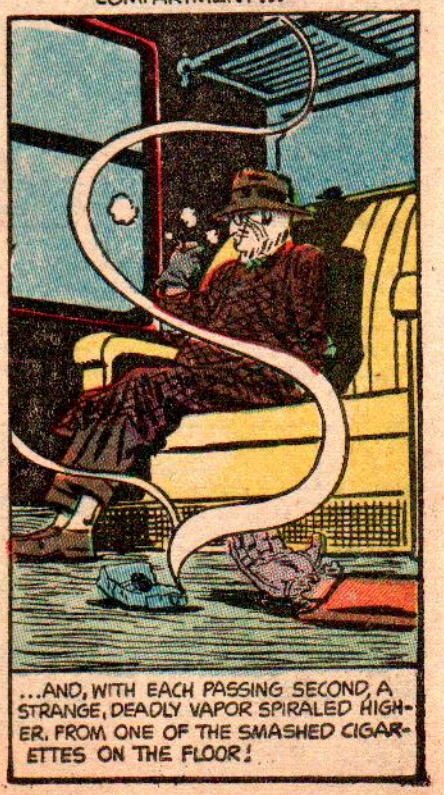

Y-YOU... YOU'RE THE SCAR-FACED KILLER I WAS WARNED ABOUT!
STEP INTO MY PARLOR SAID THE SPIDER TO THE FLY! WHICH IS PRECISELY WHAT YOU'VE DONE... IN ADDITION TO HELPING ME MURDER THE MAN YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO CONTACT! NOT VERY BRIGHT OF YOU!

HELP! AIIEEEEEE!
YOUR VOICE CANNOT BE HEARD FIVE FEET FROM HERE, IDIOT...THE WALLS OF THIS COMPARTMENT HAVE BEEN SO THICKLY INSULATED THAT EVEN ATOMIC RADIATION COULDN'T SEEP OUT!


THE PRECIOUS VIAL...IT ISN'T HIDDEN IN HER CLOTHING OR ON HER CORPSE! SHE TOOK PRECAUTIONS, SHE SAID...WAIT! OF COURSE ...HER PURSE!

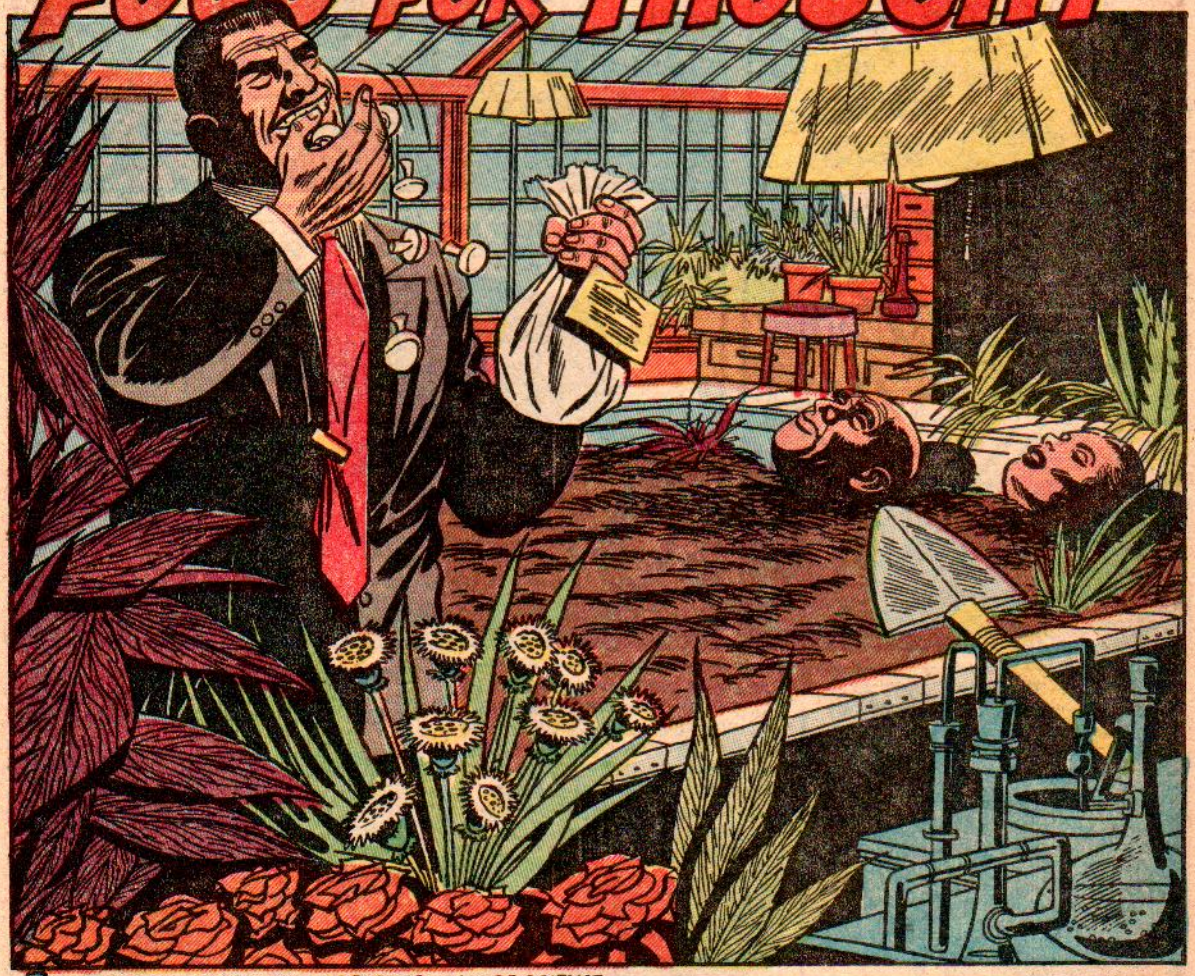
NO SIGN OF THE VIAL! JUST A COMPACT...COMB...CIGARETTES! I'VE PRACTICALLY TAKEN HER PURSE APART...BUT NO DEADLY PLAGUE GERMS! BAH!
CIGARETTES


ALL SHE BROUGHT WITH HER IS THIS PILE OF WORTHLESS JUNK. EITHER SHE WAS AN IMPOSTOR ...OR THE TINY VIAL IS HIDDEN ELSEWHERE ON THE TRAIN! I'LL WAIT HERE FOR A HALF-HOUR, THEN BEGIN MY SEARCH IN EVERY COMPARTMENT ON EVERY CAR!
CRASH


THE SCAR-FACED MAN TURNED AWAY IN RAGE. THE SECONDS TICKED BY, AS HE WAITED IN HIS INGENIOUSLY INSULATED COMPARTMENT...
...AND, WITH EACH PASSING SECOND, A STRANGE, DEADLY VAPOR SPIRALED HIGHER, FROM ONE OF THE SMASHED CIGARETTES ON THE FLOOR!

BOTANICAL RESEARCH WAS ALL THAT INTERESTED DR. LEONARD COPPER...HIS LABORATORY AND HIS WIFE DORIS CONSTITUTED ALL THAT THE MEEK LITTLE SCIENTIST DESIRED. ENTER, THEN, DORIS' BROTHER GUS...THE SAME GUS STOKES WANTED BY THE POLICE OF SIXTEEN STATES--AND THE RESULT WAS, INEVITABLY...

FOOD FOR THOUGHT



DR. LEONARD COPPER WAS A DEVOTED MAN OF SCIENCE. HIS PALACE WAS THE LABORATORY HE HAD INSTALLED IN THE LITTLE HOUSE HE SHARED WITH HIS BELOVED DORIS...

H-HE'S AT THE FRONT DOOR NOW... PROMISE YOU WON'T LOSE YOUR TEMPER. IT...IT'S MY BROTHER... GUS IS HERE!
WHAT? THAT MURDEROUS HALF-WIT... COMING TO SPONGE OFF US AGAIN?
KNOCK KNOCK

WHATSA MATTER WITH YOU TWO...YOU BOTH DEAF? I BEEN POUNDING ON THAT DOOR FOR FI' MINUTES...I'M HOT AS A THREE-DOLLAR PISTOL!
I'D BETTER SLIP THESE MUSHROOMS BACK INTO THE BAG AND SLIP IT INTO MY POCKET! I DON'T WANT MY SPECIMENS DESTROYED BY THAT HAM-HANDED GORILLA...

ME AND MY PAL ARNIE PULLED A LI'L JOB UPSTATE...SOMETHING WENT WRONG AND WE'RE BOTH ON THE LAM! I'LL HOLE UP HERE TILL HE CALLS TO TELL ME THE COAST IS CLEAR! OH...HI, DOC!
YOU'RE TO GET OUT OF HERE AT ONCE, GUS! DORIS AND I HAVE TOLERATED YOU AS LONG AS WE'RE GOING TO!

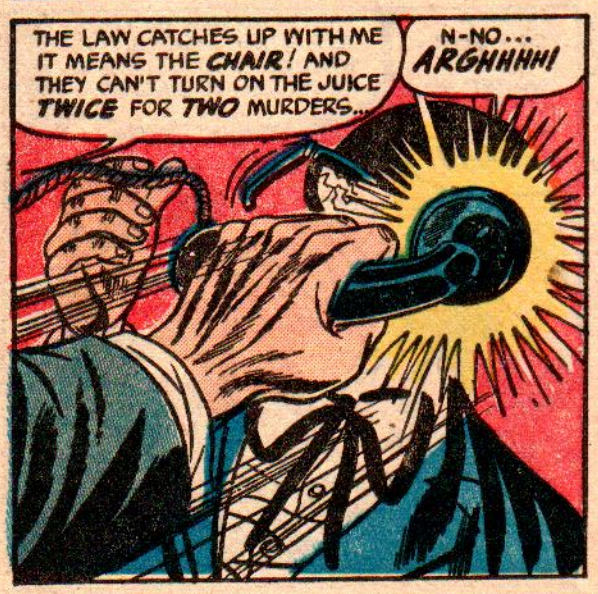
YOU'RE A DEAD-BEAT... A KILLER... WANTED IN AT LEAST A DOZEN... UNGHHH!
THAT'S NO WAY TO TALK TO A GUEST WHO'LL BE STAYING WITH YOU UNTIL HE DECIDES TO AMSCRAY!

LEONARD DON'T NEVER SEEM TO LEARN THAT I DON'T WANT NO SASSY BACKTALK, DOES HE? I'M FAMISHED, DORIS...BE A GOOD SISTER AND HUSTLE ME UP SOME CHOW!
Y-YES...OF COURSE, GUS...

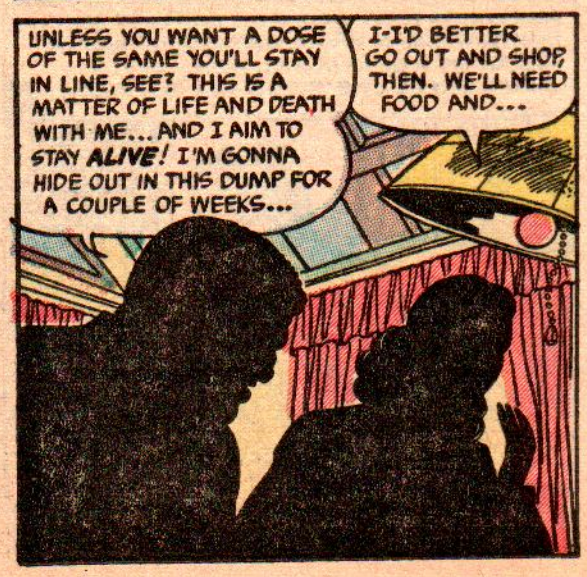
EVERYTHING WENT WRONG ON THIS LAST JOB! THE NIGHTWATCHMAN WAS NOSING AROUND AND WE HAD TO PUT A SLUG IN HIM, THEN...HEY! I DIDN'T SAY NO ONE COULD USE THE PHONE!

P-PLEASE HURRY, OPERATOR! THIS IS MOST URGE...
THOUGHT YOU'D YODEL TO THE POLICE, LEONARD? ONE THING THAT MAKES ME SEE RED IS A STOOLY!

YOU MIGHT AS WELL HANG UP NOW, DOC! THIS IS THE LAST TIME YOU'RE GONNA TALK TO ANYONE, YOU LOUSY TWO-TIMER...
K-KEEP AWAY FROM ME, GUS! I WON'T TELL A SOUL YOU'VE BEEN HERE IF Y-YOU CLEAR OUT RIGHT NOW! PLEASE, GUS...


THE LAW CATCHES UP WITH ME IT MEANS THE CHAIR! AND THEY CAN'T TURN ON THE JUICE TWICE FOR TWO MURDERS...
N-NO... ARGHHHH!

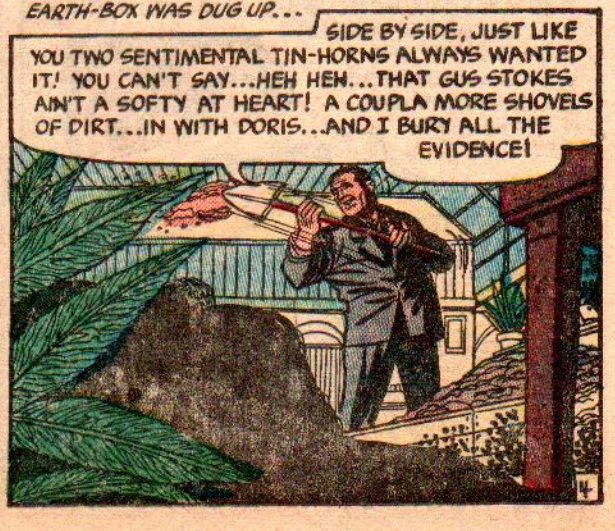
YOU...YOU'VE KILLED HIM, YOU BUTCHER! DOC...LEONARD...H-HE'S DEAD! YOU'LL SUFFER FOR THIS, YOU DEVIL...
KNOCK IT OFF, DORIS! WE GOT WORK TO DO NOW!


UNLESS YOU WANT A DOSE OF THE SAME YOU'LL STAY IN LINE, SEE? THIS IS A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH WITH ME... AND I AIM TO STAY ALIVE! I'M GONNA HIDE OUT IN THIS DUMP FOR A COUPLE OF WEEKS...
I-I'D BETTER GO OUT AND SHOP, THEN. WE'LL NEED FOOD AND...

GO OUT SHOPPING...SO'S YOU CAN PHONE THE POLICE? NOT ON YOUR TINTYPE, DORIS...NEITHER ONE OF US IS LEAVING THIS SHACK UNTIL I GET THAT ALL-CLEAR CALL FROM ARNIE! WE'LL MAKE DO WITH THE GRUB THAT'S IN THE HOUSE! NOW GRAB A SHOVEL...WE GOT WORK IN DOC'S LAB!

A WEEK PASSED. AND GUS STOKES' ENORMOUS APPETITE CUT DEEPLY INTO THE SUPPLY OF FOOD REMAINING IN THE COPPER HOUSEHOLD...

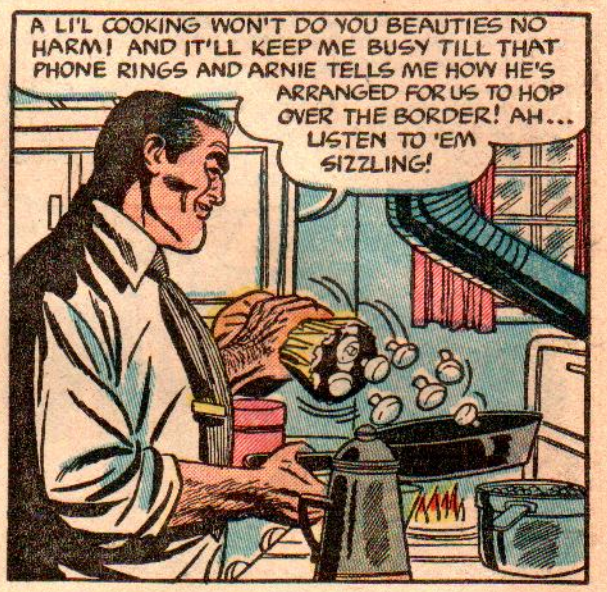
FOR A MOMENT THE FRANTIC WRITHING CONTINUED, THEN IT WAS ALL OVER. ONCE AGAIN THE GRUESOME EARTH-BOX WAS DUG UP...



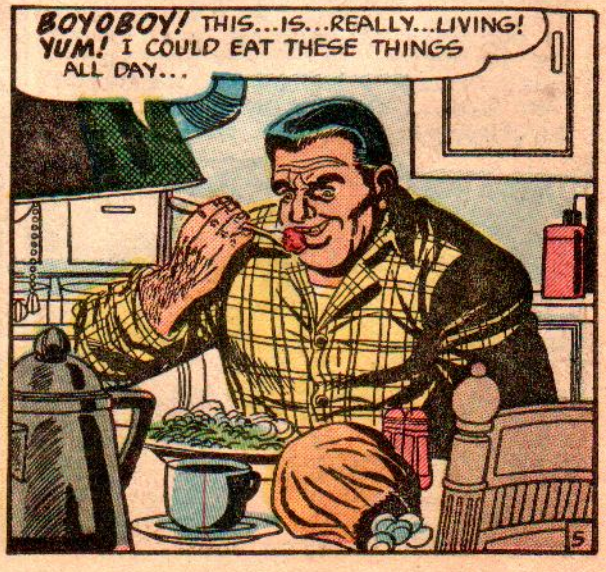
HEY...WHAT'S THAT? LOOKS LIKE MUSHROOMS! W-WHY, THE LI'L EGGHEAD...HE MUSTA HAD A POCKETFUL OF 'EM WHEN I PUT 'IM OUTA MISERY! I'M GONNA HAVE DELICACIES WITH THEM CANS OF BAKED BEANS!

HOW'D THE LI'L JERK KNOW I'M NUTS ABOUT MUSHROOMS? IMAGINE...DOC AND DORIS... HELPING TO MAKE ME COMFORTABLE WHILE I WAIT FOR ARNIE'S CALL! THIS IS SURE A TWIST OF FATE! C'MERE, YOU PRECIOUS LI'L THINGS... COME TO GUSSIE!

WITH THESE TWO FOGIES OUTA THE WAY IT WON'T BE HALF-BAD WAITING HERE FOR ARNIE'S CALL! MIGHT EVEN COME TONIGHT...IN THE MEAN-TIME I'LL HAVE A REAL FEAST ON THESE HERE THINGS DOC HAD STUFFED IN HIS POCKET!

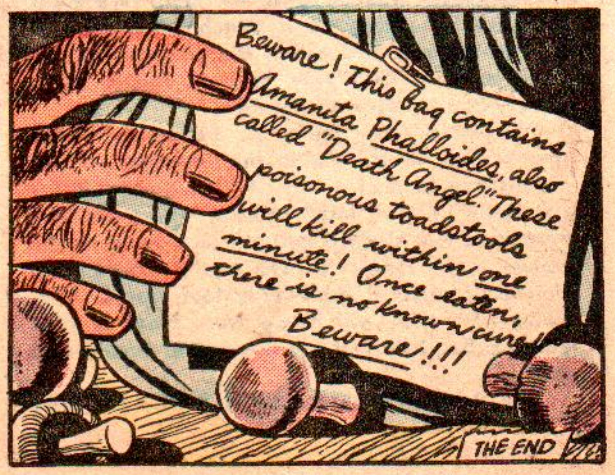

A LI'L COOKING WON'T DO YOU BEAUTIES NO HARM! AND IT'LL KEEP ME BUSY TILL THAT PHONE RINGS AND ARNIE TELLS ME HOW HE'S ARRANGED FOR US TO HOP OVER THE BORDER! AH... LISTEN TO 'EM SIZZLING!

LEAVE IT TO ARNIE TO FIGGER A WAY OUTA THIS MESS FOR BOTH OF US! AND WITH DORIS AND HER STUPID HUSBAND OUTA THE WAY, THE COPS'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO...HMMMM! GOD, THAT STUFF'S AROMATIC!


BOYOBOY! THIS...IS...REALLY...LIVING! YUM! I COULD EAT THESE THINGS ALL DAY...

AGAIN AND AGAIN GUS STOKES SWALLOWED THE DELECTABLE TIDBITS HE HAD TAKEN FROM HIS VICTIM'S POCKET. THEN...

FOR A LONG MOMENT GUS STOKES THRASHED WILDLY ON THE FLOOR. THEN THE TELEPHONE STOPPED RINGING AND DEATHLY SILENCE SETTLED OVER THE DOOMED COPPER HOUSEHOLD...



RETRI BUTION

Slowly the doctor raised the sheet and covered the face of the late Max Snitman, Detective First Grade, of the thirty-second precinct.

"He was a brave man," praised Captain John Peterson. "Killed in the line of duty. We are sending his body to his hometown out in Illinois for burial. Take a few days off, John. I know how this must have hurt you. He was your best friend."

There was a blank look on the face of Detective John Carbone. He had shed his tears, and there were none left. Now in his heart was the cry of bitter revenge.

"He was killed by the Wilton Mob," he protested. "And what can we do? Like a pack of wild animals they are taking over the city, making a mockery of law and order. They belong in the jungle or behind cages in the zoo. I wish I had the power to give them a dose of their own medicine."

Without any additional words, detective John Carbone left Mercy Hospital. His car was parked outside. He drove to the zoo. Somehow, whenever he was puzzled, he could find mental ease by sitting on a bench on the south side of the zoo and watch the youngsters with their parents. Suddenly he was aware of a poorly dressed man at his side.

"You wish you could do something about the Wilton Mob," said the stranger. "You would like to rid the city of them once and for all. Deep in your heart you are telling yourself what you would do if you just had some mystic power. I am going to give you a magic ring. You may wear it for twenty-four hours. Anything you wish will come true. Now is your chance. See that you use this power wisely and justly."

The stranger took a ruby ring from his third finger, left hand, and handed it to the detective.

"I shall await you and the return of this ring," he announced. "There shall be justice done in this fair city."

The Wilton Night Club was a famous and notorious spot on the outskirts of the city. It boasted the finest gambling establishment in the East. John Carbone walked in and went to the back, which was crowded with people. He bought a hundred-dollar stack of chips and put them on number nine.

"Nine wins," said the croupier. "Place your bets again."

John Carbone moved his larger stack of chips to number 15. The ball started spinning and then came to a rest.

"Fifteen wins," announced the croupier, as people began to gather around the lucky man.

Ten times he placed his bets, and each time he had won. Beads of perspiration were dripping down the forehead of the gambler. He winked his eye twice. That was a signal to send for his boss, Louis Garton. When a man has won almost a hundred-thousand dollars, something must be wrong. Louis Garton came from his private office and spoke quickly to the croupier. Then he made an announcement.

"All wheels are closed for tonight. The bank is busted."

"You have another hundred-thousand in your safe," said John Carbone. "I'll match all my money against yours on the flip of a coin. You toss the coin. Unless you are yellow."

Louis Garton wasn't exactly worried. He had an ace up his sleeve. He got his money and then returned. He placed a stack of bills on the table. Then he took a dime from his pocket and showed both sides of the coin. He tossed

it up in the air.

"I cry heads," was all that came from his mouth.

The coin came down on the table tails. John Carbone scooped up his money.

"With all that money you will need protection," said the gambler. "I'll send three of my boys with you."

One the the gangsters sat next to the detective, while the other two were in the back of the car. There were no other automobiles along highway 25A.

"Pull up to the side of the road," ordered Pete Collins. "This is the end of the road for you."

"You have it all twisted," contradicted John Carbone. "This is the end of the road for you three rats. Rats you are and rats you shall be."

The bodies of the three crooks started to shrink and their features changed. In two minutes, they had became three rats and they scampered out of the car into the field on the side of the road. The detective got behind the wheel and turned his car around.

"Come on in," snickered Louis Garton, as he figured he was going to get all the money back from his three boys. He heard the signal knocks on the door. It opened, and he faced John Carbone.

"You . . . you," he managed to utter.

"You dirty snake," retorted John Carbone. "You slimy crawling thing. Become as you really are."

Louis Garton never had a chance to go for the gun in his desk. He became thin and long and slid right down from his chair onto the floor. Then out of the room went a snake.

George the Gorilla answered the door bell of Walter Wilton's gorgeous penthouse apartment. He took one look at the man outside and could smell copper.

"Beat it, flatfoot," he jeered. "Unless you got a search warrant you can't come in here."

John Carbone pushed the big hulk of human flesh right back into the apartment. He looked directly at George the Gorilla.

"So you are the strong-arm fellow who breaks peoples' bones. It's about time you really became your inner nature."

Hair began to appear all over George's face, and soon he was a Gorilla. He grunted and ran out of the apartment. Apparently the noise had disturbed somebody else. A thin sallow-faced youth came into the living room.

"Tony the Trigger Boy," greeted the detective. "So you killed my best friend."

Tony Masuro was quick on the gun. No doubt about it. In a flash he held a deadly .45 in his right hand.

"You can't pull that trigger," announced John Carbone calmly, without a single trace of fear in his voice.

"You are about as bad as a killer coyote. So change into one."

The transformation was rapid, and soon a coyote ran out of the room. The detective sat back in an easy chair. He was waiting for the head man to appear. And he didn't have to wait long. Walter Wilton entered the room, dressed in a luxurious silk rest robe.

"Where are my boys?" he asked.

"You may meet them again, Mr. Wilton. I have come here to inform you that your days are over as head of the Wilton Mob. Too long have you been a vulture living on others."

Walter Wilton hardly raised an eyebrow as he heard those words. His right hand merely tightened on the automatic that was in his robe's pocket.

"You will leave quietly, please — alive or dead — take your choice."

"You have no choice," snapped back the detective. "Become your true nature. A vulture you are and a vulture you shall be."

The human being changed quickly into the bird of prey. He flew right out of an open window. John had one more place to visit, and that was Fred's Pool Room. An hour later he walked right into the place and then downstairs. He pushed a button, and a section of the wall moved aside. There were about twenty-five men assembled there.

"Listen to me, you sheep," he announced at the top of his voice. "Your leader is no more. Without a leader you are lost. Lost sheep — that is what you all are. So become sheep every one of you."

As John Carbone left the place, he could hear the blaah-blaah of a group of lost sheep. His work was done. He returned to the zoo and his bench. The stranger was still there. He returned the ring to the man.

"I forgot to ask your name. What is it?"

"Retri Bution," replied the stranger. "Now close your eyes."

When John Carbone opened his eyes, he faced Captain John Peterson.

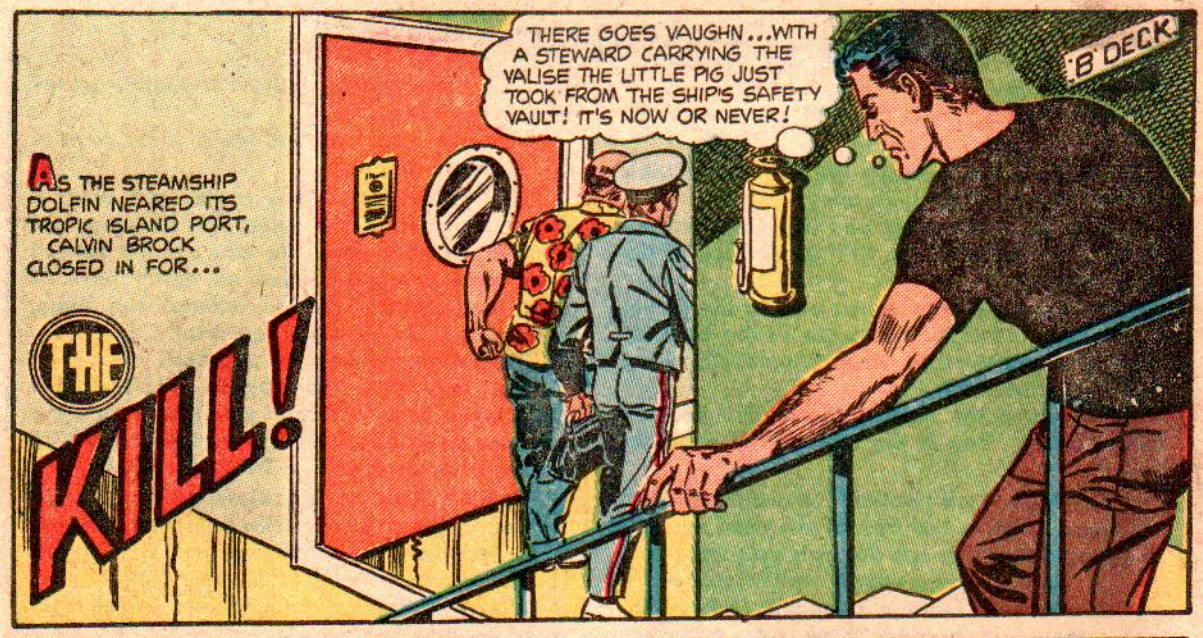
"I've been looking all over the city for you," said his superior. "The craziest thing has happened. The entire Wilton Mob has vanished— as though they were wiped off the face of the earth. Know anything about it?"

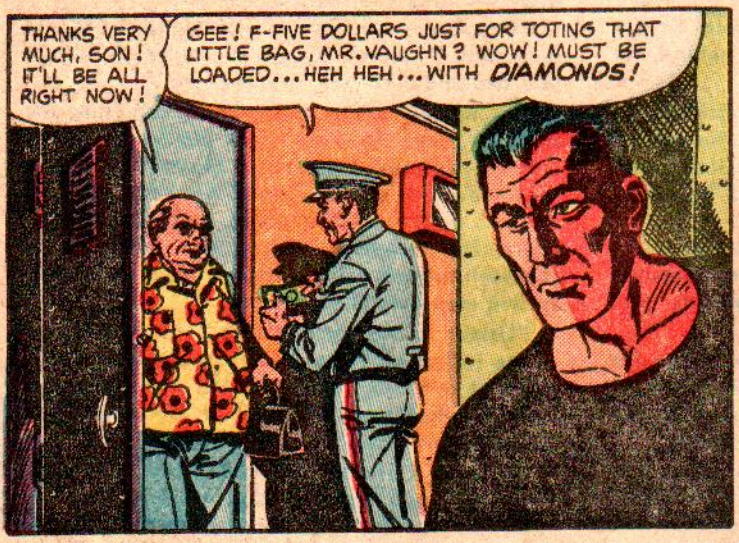
The detective was about to answer, when he heard a commotion. He stopped a zoo guard.

"Anything wrong?"

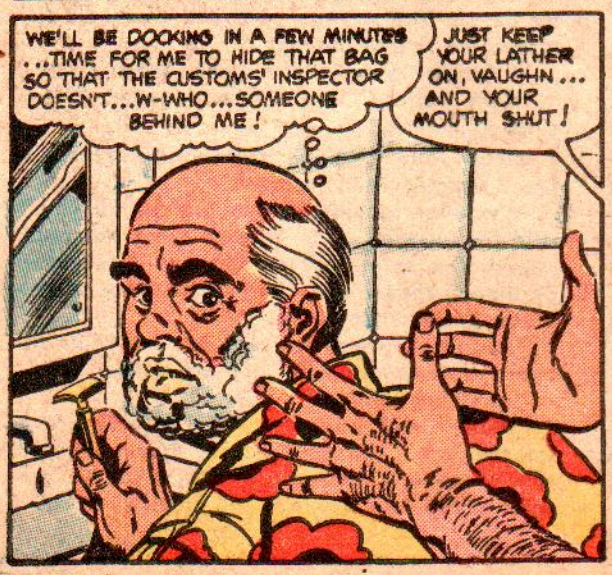
"Naw," said the guard. "Just a lucky break for the zoo. The cops found three gigantic rats, a snake, a coyote, a gorilla, a vulture and some sheep. We got them all in cages now."

The End


AS THE STEAMSHIP DOLFIN NEARED ITS TROPIC ISLAND PORT, CALVIN BROCK CLOSED IN FOR...
THE KILL!
THERE GOES VAUGHN...WITH A STEWARD CARRYING THE VALISE THE LITTLE PIG JUST TOOK FROM THE SHIP'S SAFETY VAULT! IT'S NOW OR NEVER!
'B' DECK

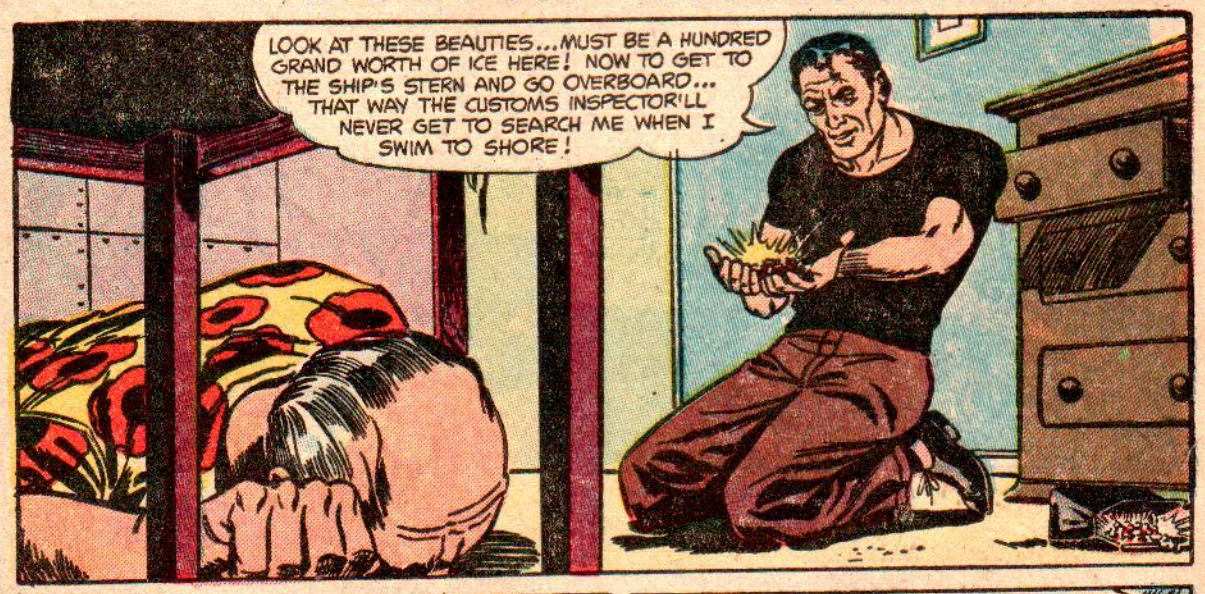

THANKS VERY MUCH, SON! IT'LL BE ALL RIGHT NOW!
GEE! F-FIVE DOLLARS JUST FOR TOTING THAT LITTLE BAG, MR. VAUGHN? WOW! MUST BE LOADED...HEH HEH...WITH DIAMONDS!

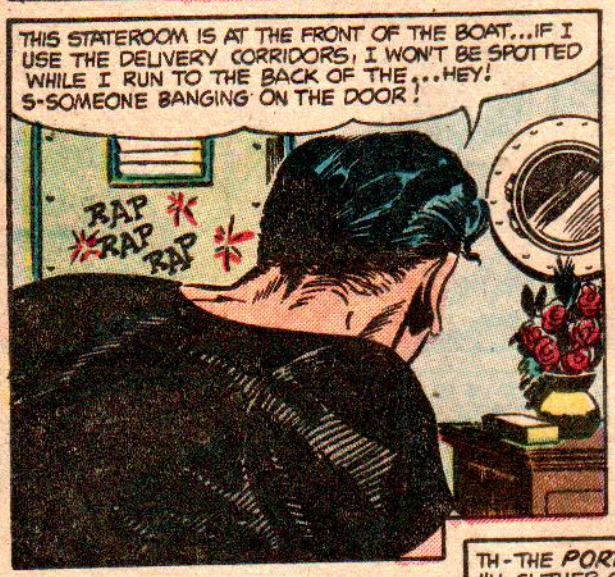
FIVE MINUTES GONE BY..TIME TO START CROWDING MR. SPENCER VAUGHN! THIS DUPLICATE KEY COST ME $20- BUT THAT BAG'S WORTH IT! LOADED WITH DIAMONDS THE STEWARD SAID...HAH HAH... IF HE ONLY KNEW!


WE'LL BE DOCKING IN A FEW MINUTES ...TIME FOR ME TO HIDE THAT BAG SO THAT THE CUSTOMS' INSPECTOR DOESN'T...W-WHO...SOMEONE BEHIND ME!
JUST KEEP YOUR LATHER ON, VAUGHN... AND YOUR MOUTH SHUT!

C-CALVIN BROCK! HOW'D YOU GET ON BOARD? WHERE'D YOU... GLMFFF!
I'VE BEEN TRAILING YOU EVER SINCE YOU LEFT EUROPE, VAUGHN! NOW KEEP QUIET, BEFORE I STRANGLE YOU! I WANT THAT BAG...THOSE DIAMONDS YOU'VE GOT ARE GOING TO FATTEN MY BANK ACCOUNT!

THOUGHT YOU SHOOK ME AFTER YOU SWIPED THOSE DIAMONDS IN AMSTERDAM, DIDN'T YOU ? I BEEN A HALF-STEP BEHIND YOU EVER SINCE... BUT THERE'S A CHANGE OF PLANS, SEE ? I'M SMUGGLING THOSE HOT DIAMONDS INTO THIS CRUMMY LITTLE PORT ! THEY'RE MINE, FATSO !
GRNFFFF !
NOW JUST SIT DOWN AND RELAX BEFORE ...W-WHAT TH... ? WANNA GET ROUGH, EH ?
OWWWW !
BAM !
YOUR AIM WAS LOUSY, VAUGHN ! NOW I'M GONNA ...
AIEEE !
P-PLEASE ..MAKE A DEAL ...CUT YOU IN FOR...
ARGHH !
ONLY ONE OF US IS GONNA SMUGGLE THOSE DIAMONDS INTO THIS PORT, VAUGHN ...ONLY ONE OF US IS GONNA POCKET THE DOUGH FROM THOSE HOT DIAMONDS ! ME !
LOOKS LIKE FAT-MAN BLACKED OUT ! TAKE ME JUST A SECOND TO GRAB THAT VALISE AND GET OUTTA HERE !


LOOK AT THESE BEAUTIES...MUST BE A HUNDRED GRAND WORTH OF ICE HERE! NOW TO GET TO THE SHIP'S STERN AND GO OVERBOARD... THAT WAY THE CUSTOMS INSPECTOR'LL NEVER GET TO SEARCH ME WHEN I SWIM TO SHORE!

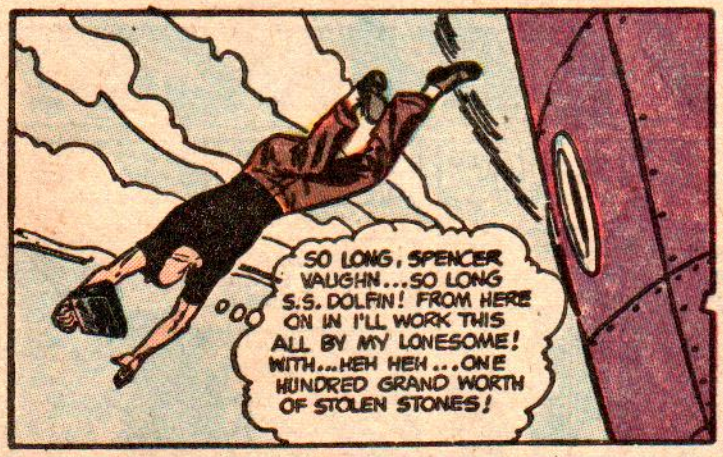

THIS STATEROOM IS AT THE FRONT OF THE BOAT...IF I USE THE DELIVERY CORRIDORS, I WON'T BE SPOTTED WHILE I RUN TO THE BACK OF THE...HEY! S-SOMEONE BANGING ON THE DOOR!
RAP RAP RAP

M-MEBBE I'D BETTER MAKE A DEAL WITH VAUGHN! TOGETHER WE CAN...GOOD GOD! HE--HE'S DEAD! I-I MUSTA STRANGLED HIM!

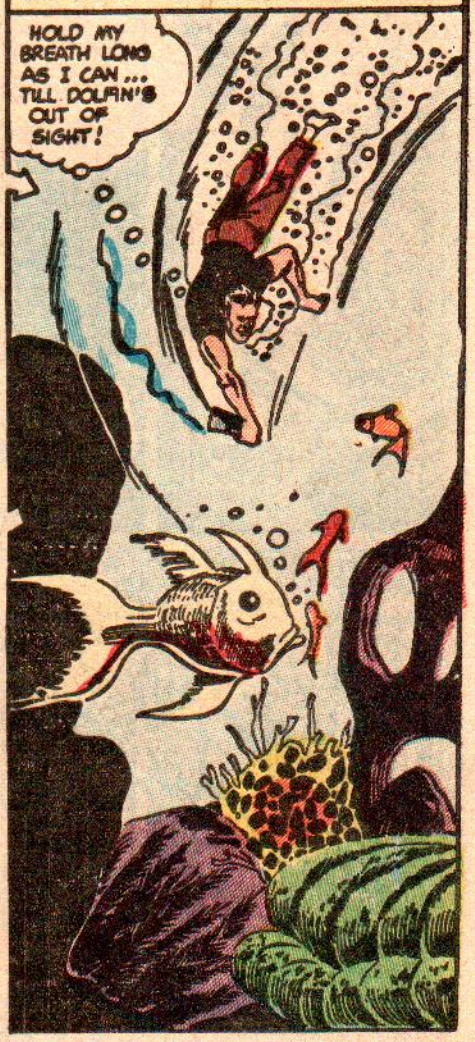
S-SOUNDS LIKE TWO OF THEM OUT THERE...MEBBE THEY TUMBLED TO THE IDEA THAT VAUGHN WAS PLANNING TO SMUGGLE DIAMONDS INTO PORT! AND ME...I'M TRAPPED IN HERE WITH A CORPSE! IT'S A SURE MURDER CHARGE, UNLESS...UNLESS...

TH-THE PORTHOLE! I'LL SLITHER OUT...IT'LL FIT NEATLY INTO MY PLANS TO SWIM TO SHORE!

NO TIME TO LOSE...T-THEY'VE GOT A KEY! LOCK'S TURNING... UGHH...I HOPE THIS CHANGE OF PLANS WORK!

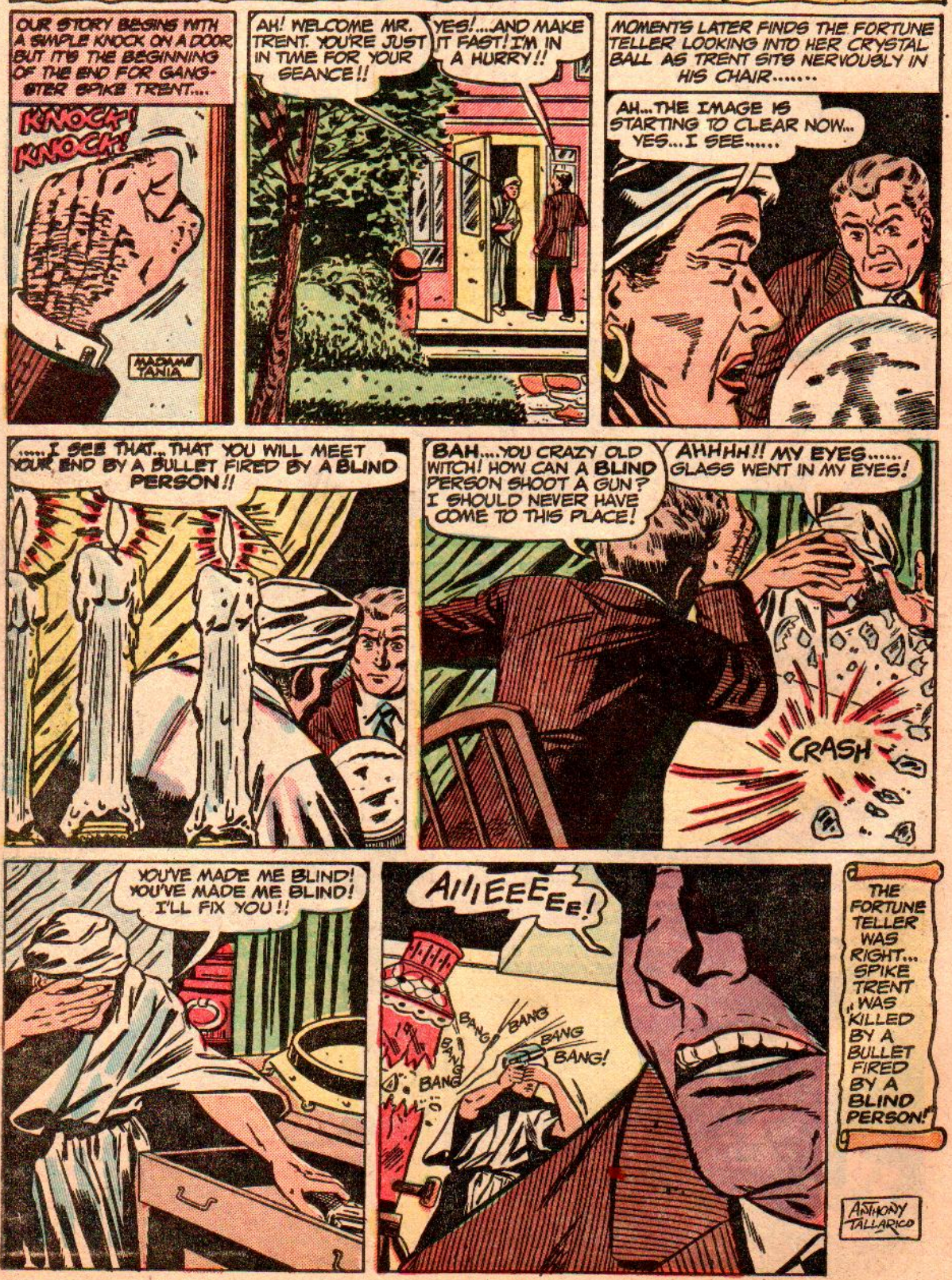


DOWN INTO THE WARM TROPIC WATER, CALVIN BROCK PLUNGED...THE BAG OF PRICELESS DIAMONDS CLUTCHED IN HIS HAND! HE FELT A CHURNING, AS THE BIG SHIP MOVED PAST HIM...



WHAT GRISLY FATE IS IN STORE FOR CALVIN BROCK? IF IT ISN'T A SHARK THAT THREATENS HIS LIFE...*WHAT IS IT?* SEND *YOUR* IDEA OF THE ENDING OF THIS STORY TO ALFRED V. FAGO, 1472 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, N.Y.. THE BEST SYNOPSIS WILL BE ILLUSTRATED IN AN EARLY ISSUE OF *STRANGE SUSPENSE STORIES*, WITH *FULL CREDIT* TO THE ONE WHO SUBMITS IT, PLUS *$10 IN CASH!*

DEADLY SEANCE!



VON MOHL VS THE ANTS!

HUGO VON MOHL WAS A MAN AFRAID OF NOTHING! HE WAS CRUEL, RUTHLESS AND ARROGANT. HE WAS MASTER -- ABSOLUTE MASTER -- OF HIS PLANTATION. AND ALL WHO DARED DEFY HIM DIED HORRIBLY. THEN CAME ONE DEFIANCE THAT VON MOHL COULDN'T FIGHT. A DEFIANCE THAT WAS TO TEACH THE SADISTIC PLANTATION OWNER A LESSON -- A DEFIANCE THAT BILLED ITSELF AS ...

NO, NO, MASSAH! NOT THE ANT PITS! THEY WILL EAT ME ALIVE! THEY WILL STRIP THE FLESH OF MY BONES! EEEEEEE!

YOU WILL DIE AS I HAVE ORDERED IT! I'M MASTER HERE! AND YOUR LIFE IS FORFEIT FOR YOUR DEFIANCE!

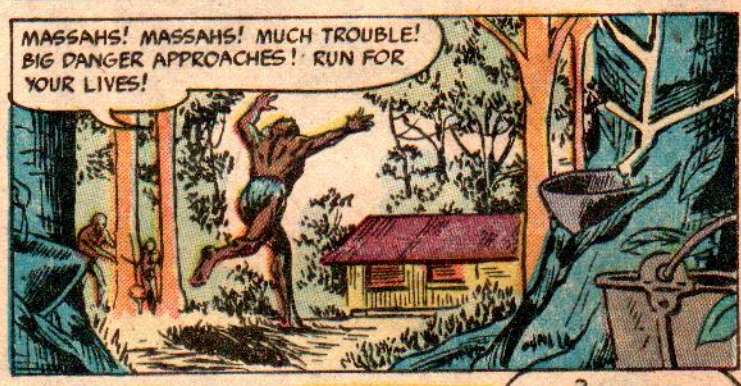
Dicko

HUGO VON MOHL RULED WITH AN IRON FIST. TO HIM, AFRICA WAS THE LAND OF WEALTH AND POWER. HE WAS KING AND EMPEROR. HE WAS THE LAW. HE WAS THE NATIVE GOD! AND DEATH CAME TO THOSE WHO DEFIED HIM!

HUGO VON MOHL WAS HATED BY EVERYONE IN THE VELDT-BY BOTH BLACKS AND WHITES ALIKE. BUT BUSINESS WAS BUSINESS--AND VON MOHL WAS THE SETTLEMENT'S RICHEST, MOST SUCCESSFUL OWNER...
COME, MISTER VON MOHL. WE MUST HAVE YOUR COOPERATION. WITHOUT YOUR WORD, THE TRADING BOATS CANNOT DOCK HERE IN TAANGA!
THAT'S TOO BAD! BUT I DON'T INTEND TO GIVE IT!

I HAVE MY OWN AGREEMENT WITH THOSE BOAT-OWNERS. I CAN SELL MY RUBBER HARVEST FOR THE LOWER PRICE--AND I DON'T PLAN TO JOIN ANY UNION WHICH RAISES THEIR PRICE!

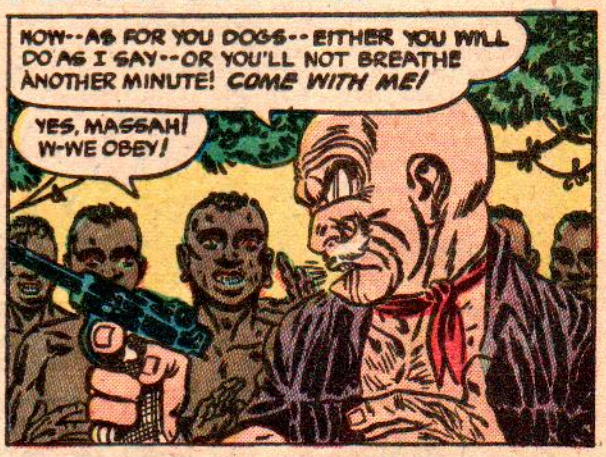
YOU'RE A DIRTY DEVIL, VON MOHL. ONE OF THESE DAYS YOU'LL FIND OUT THAT YOU'RE NOT GOD. YOU'LL FIND THAT THERE ARE SOME THINGS BIGGER THAN YOU!
YOU FRIGHTEN ME, PETERS. YES--I'M TREMBLING! HA, HA...

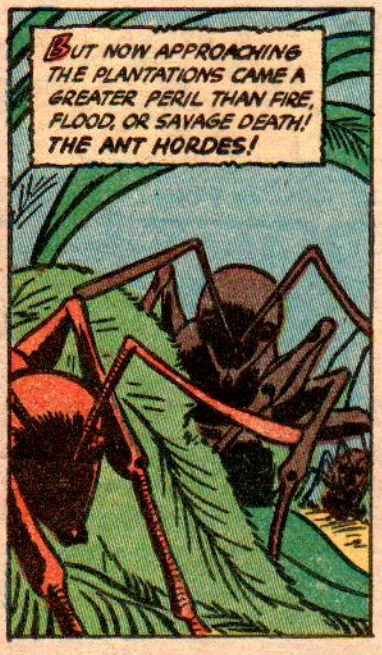

MASSAHS! MASSAHS! MUCH TROUBLE! BIG DANGER APPROACHES! RUN FOR YOUR LIVES!

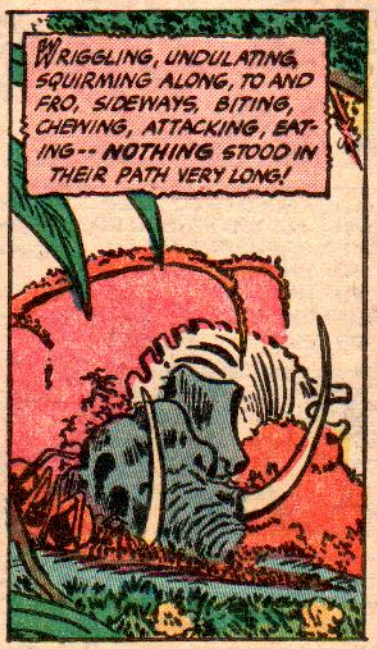
THE RED DEATH COMES! THE ANTS OF KINPUR!
WHAT? THE ANT INVASION? BUT THE GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES TOLD US THERE WEREN'T ANY SIGNS OF ANT INCREASE! GOOD SCOTT!

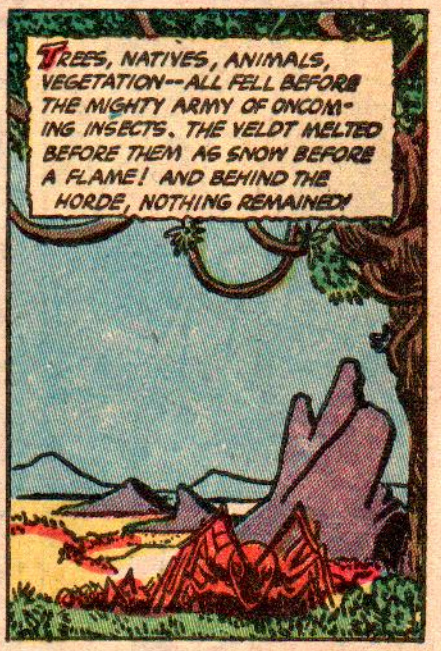
EVERYONE TO THEIR PLANTATIONS! WE HAVEN'T ANY TIME TO LOSE! THE ANTS WILL EAT EVERYTHING! HURRY!
WAIT, YOU COWARDLY FOOLS! WE CAN FIGHT THEM! WAIT!

YOU--COME WITH ME! WE'LL CALL ALL THE NATIVES IN THIS DISTRICT TO FIGHT WITH ME AGAINST THESE PESTY ANTS!
NO MASSAH! WE DIE! ANTS STRONG! ANTS KILL EVERYONE! I NOT GO!

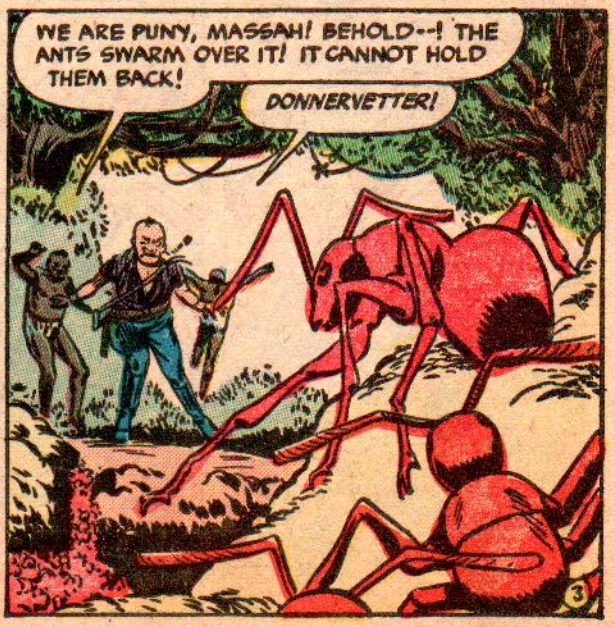


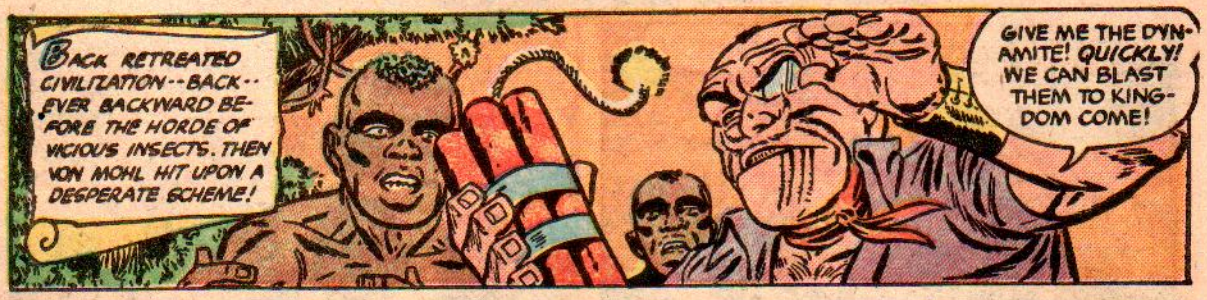




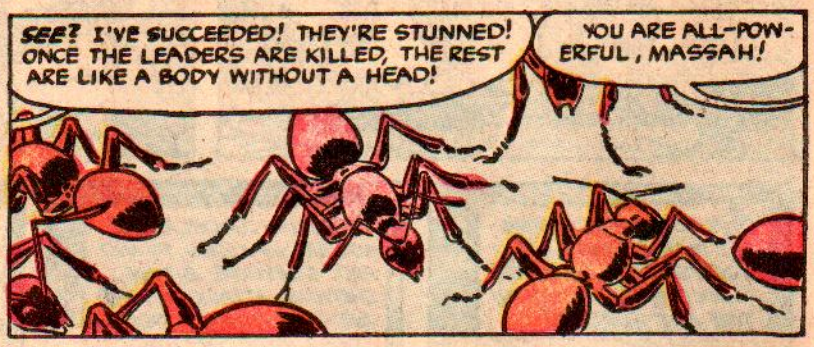


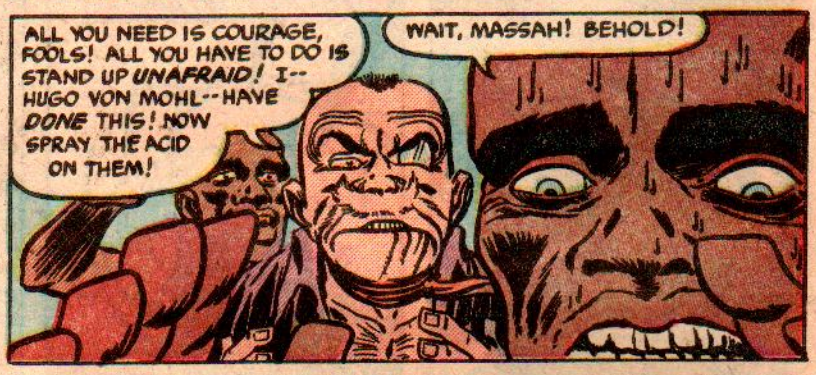
BUT ONE PERSON ALONE DARED DEFY THEM. HUGO VON MOHL WAS MADE OF STERNER STUFF--AND ONLY HE--STOOD GROUND AND FOUGHT!

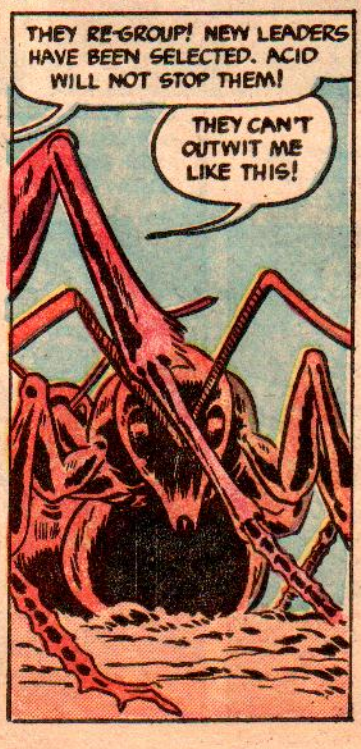


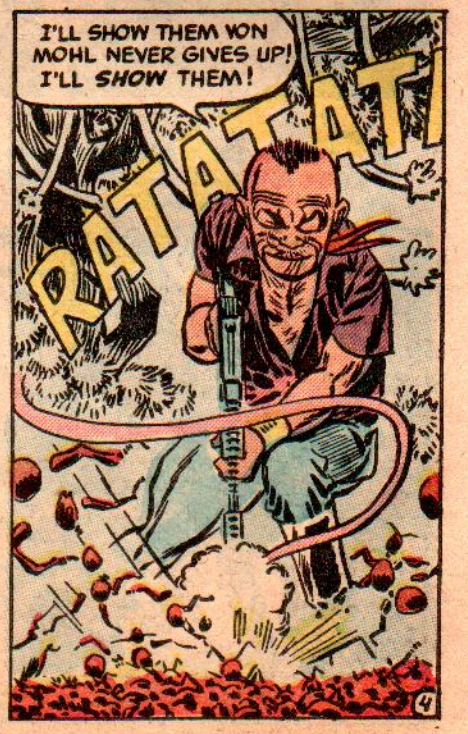

BACK RETREATED CIVILIZATION--BACK--EVER BACKWARD BEFORE THE HORDE OF VICIOUS INSECTS. THEN VON MOHL HIT UPON A DESPERATE SCHEME!
GIVE ME THE DYNAMITE! QUICKLY! WE CAN BLAST THEM TO KINGDOM COME!

BLAARAM


SEE? I'VE SUCCEEDED! THEY'RE STUNNED! ONCE THE LEADERS ARE KILLED, THE REST ARE LIKE A BODY WITHOUT A HEAD!
YOU ARE ALL-POWERFUL, MASSAH!


ALL YOU NEED IS COURAGE, FOOLS! ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS STAND UP UNAFRAID! I--HUGO VON MOHL--HAVE DONE THIS! NOW SPRAY THE ACID ON THEM!
WAIT, MASSAH! BEHOLD!

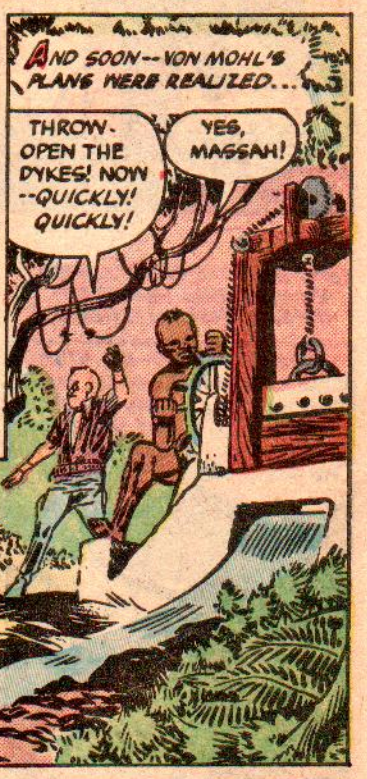

THEY RE-GROUP! NEW LEADERS HAVE BEEN SELECTED. ACID WILL NOT STOP THEM!
THEY CAN'T OUTWIT ME LIKE THIS!

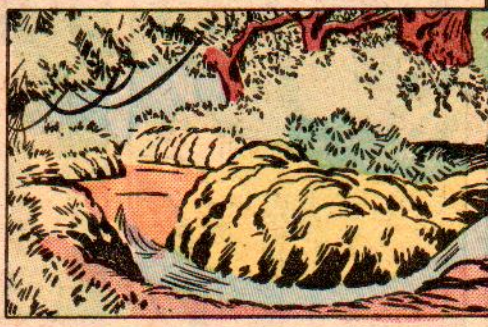

I'LL SHOW THEM VON MOHL NEVER GIVES UP! I'LL SHOW THEM!
RATATAT!

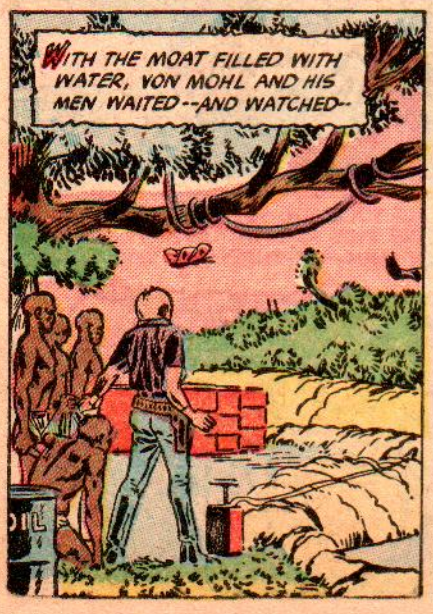
BUT MACHINE-GUN BULLETS COULDN'T STOP BILLIONS--TRILLIONS--OF INSECTS! VON MOHL AND HIS ARMY OF MEN RETREATED BEFORE THE ONCOMING RED-DEATH!
CUT DOWN THE TREES AND LET THEM SWARM OVER THEM! THIS WILL GIVE US TIME TO DIG A MOAT AROUND THE PLANTATION! QUICKLY!
BUT WHERE SHALL WE GET THE WATER FOR THE MOAT, MASSAH!

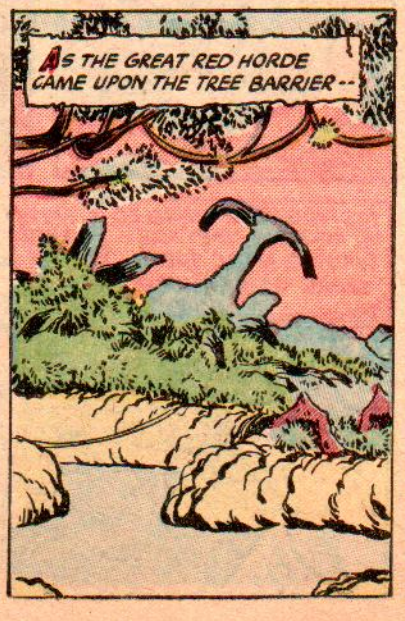
THE FIELD DYKES, STUPID! WE'LL CHANNEL THE WATER INTO THE DUG MOAT. THE HARVEST WILL BE RUINED --BUT THESE ANTS SHALL BE STOPPED!

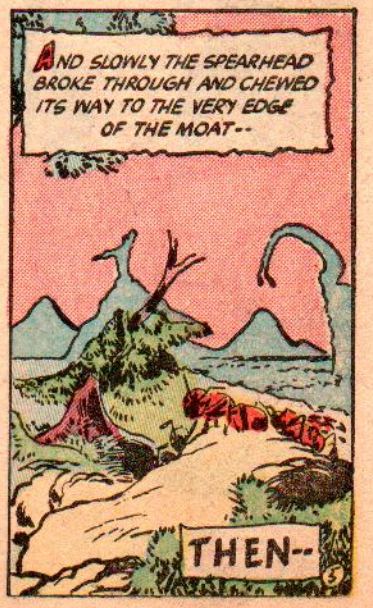
SOON MY PLANS WILL TRIUMPH AND THESE INSECTS SHALL FADE AWAY AS ALL OBSTACLES HAVE FADED AWAY BEFORE MY MIGHT! I'LL HAVE THAT MOAT DUG IN NO TIME!

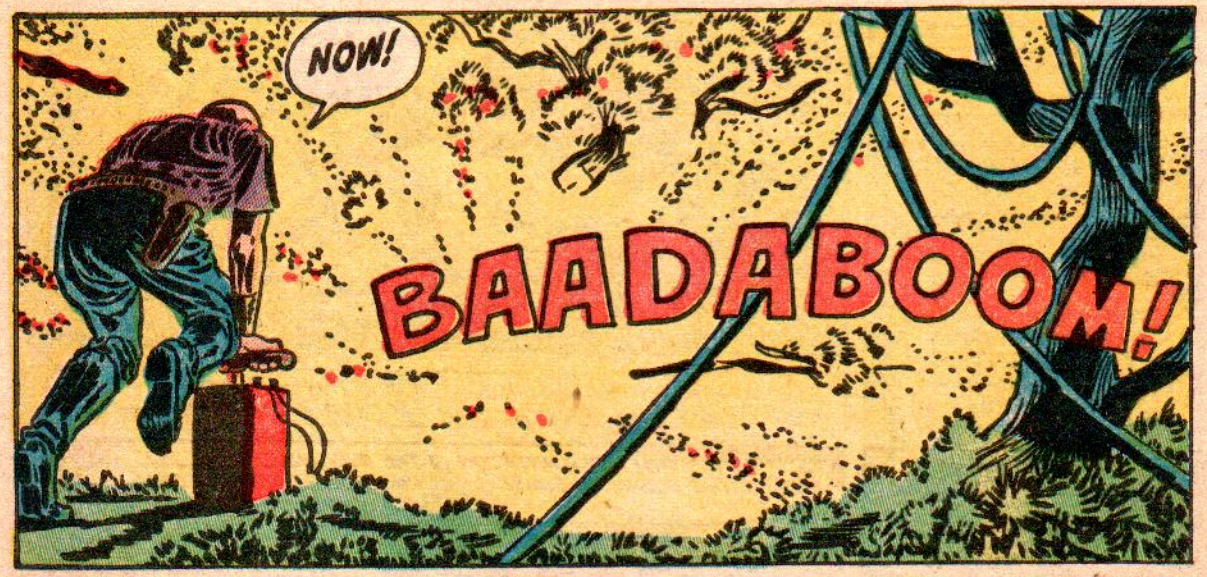

AND SOON--VON MOHL'S PLANS WERE REALIZED...
THROW-OPEN THE DYKES! NOW --QUICKLY! QUICKLY!
YES, MASSAH!



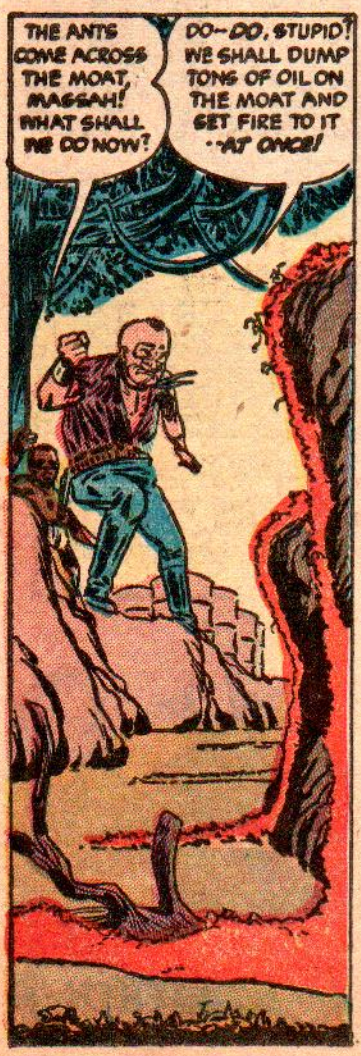

WITH THE MOAT FILLED WITH WATER, VON MOHL AND HIS MEN WAITED--AND WATCHED--

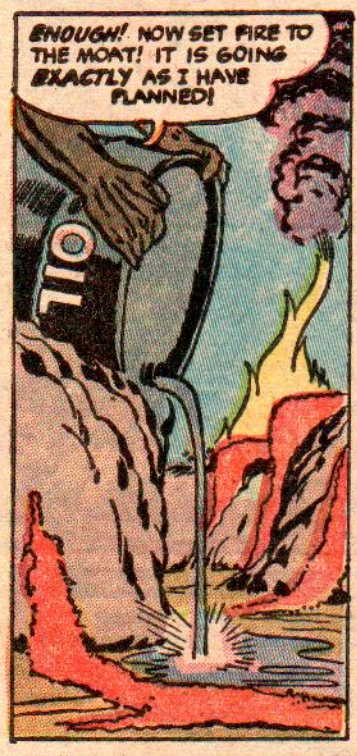

AS THE GREAT RED HORDE CAME UPON THE TREE BARRIER--


AND SLOWLY THE SPEARHEAD BROKE THROUGH AND CHEWED ITS WAY TO THE VERY EDGE OF THE MOAT--
THEN--

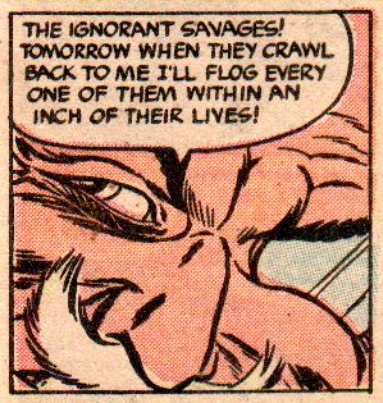


AND WHEN THE SMOKE CLEARED, VON MOHL STILL WASN'T TRIUMPHANT OVER THE RED DEATH!

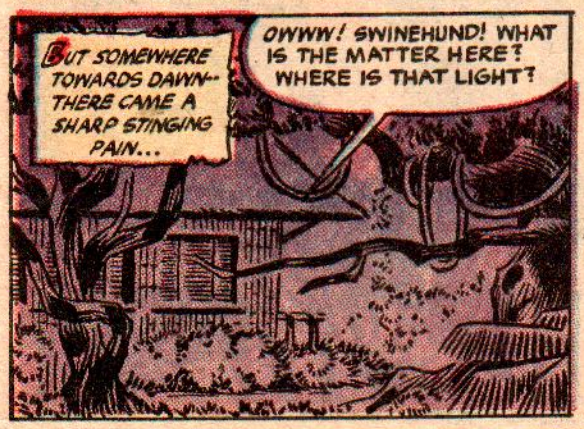


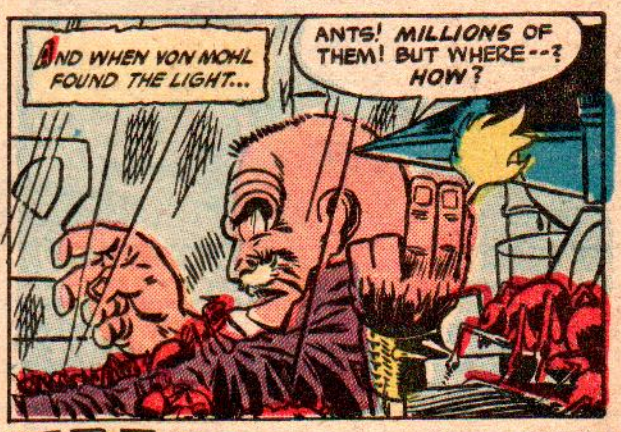


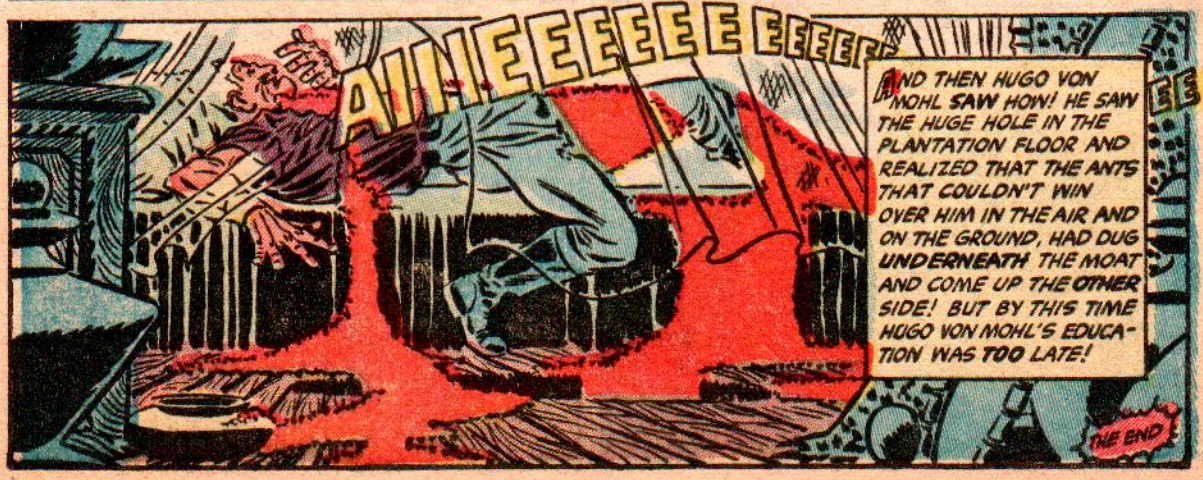
THEN AS VON MOHL RAVED AND RANTED, THE NATIVES SLOWLY INCHED AWAY UNTIL--
HEY! WHERE ARE YOU GOING? COME BACK!
NO, NO, MASSAH! THEY WILL BE BACK! THEY ARE CUNNING DEVILS!


THE IGNORANT SAVAGES! TOMORROW WHEN THEY CRAWL BACK TO ME I'LL FLOG EVERY ONE OF THEM WITHIN AN INCH OF THEIR LIVES!

AND ON THIS NOTE OF UTMOST BRAVADO, HUGO VON MOHL RETIRED TO SLEEP THE SLEEP OF THE CONQUEROR...
MY PLANTATION IS THE ONLY ONE INTACT! I'LL MAKE A TERRIFIC KILLING! ALL THE OTHER OWNERS WILL BE BEGGING ME TO TAKE THEM IN AS PARTNERS! HA, HA, THE POOR, COWARDLY FOOLS!


BUT SOMEWHERE TOWARDS DAWN-- THERE CAME A SHARP STINGING PAIN...
OWWW! SWINEHUND! WHAT IS THE MATTER HERE? WHERE IS THAT LIGHT?

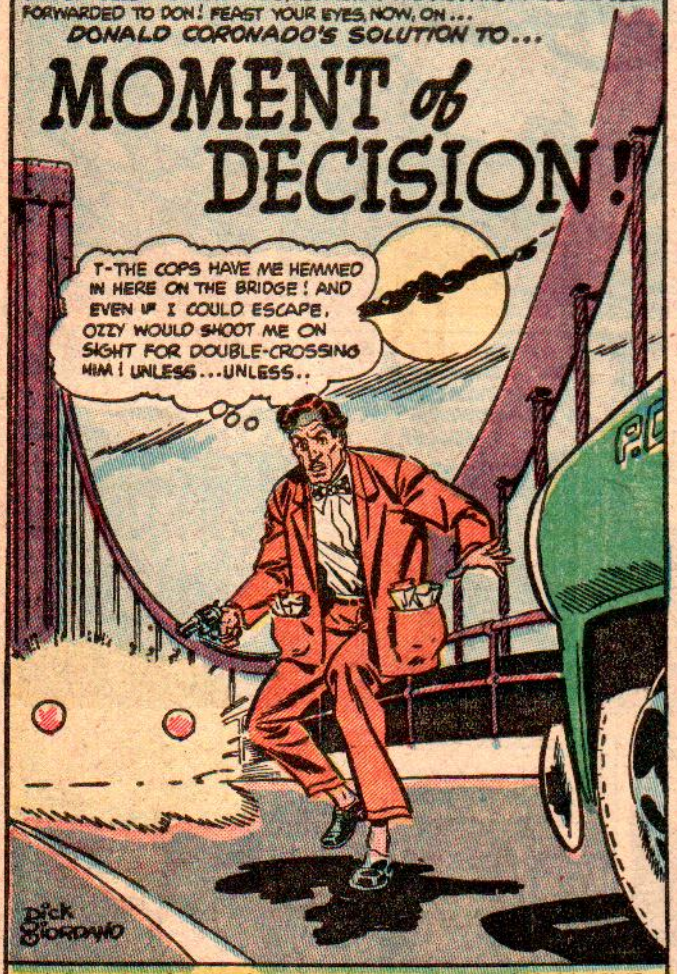

AND WHEN VON MOHL FOUND THE LIGHT...
ANTS! MILLIONS OF THEM! BUT WHERE--? HOW?


AIIIEEEEEEEEEEEEE
AND THEN HUGO VON MOHL SAW HOW! HE SAW THE HUGE HOLE IN THE PLANTATION FLOOR AND REALIZED THAT THE ANTS THAT COULDN'T WIN OVER HIM IN THE AIR AND ON THE GROUND, HAD DUG UNDERNEATH THE MOAT AND COME UP THE OTHER SIDE! BUT BY THIS TIME HUGO VON MOHL'S EDUCATION WAS TOO LATE!
THE END

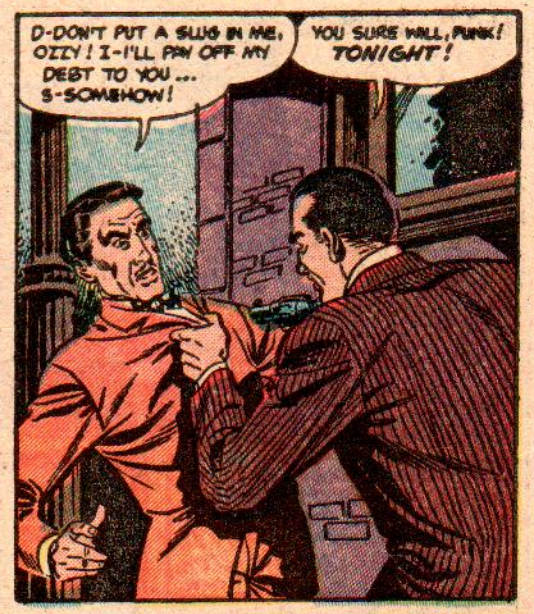
DEAR READERS...MANY THANKS FOR YOUR FLOOD OF ANSWERS TO OUR 7-PAGE PUZZLER, "MOMENT OF DECISION", WHICH WAS PUBLISHED RECENTLY IN "LAWBREAKERS SUSPENSE." IT WAS DIFFICULT TO DECIDE ON THE MOST INGENIOUS SOLUTION, BUT THE NOD FINALLY WENT TO DONALD CORONADO, OF MONTBELLO ROAD, RAMAPO, NEW YORK. THE $10. FIRST PRIZE HAS BEEN FORWARDED TO DON! FEAST YOUR EYES, NOW, ON...

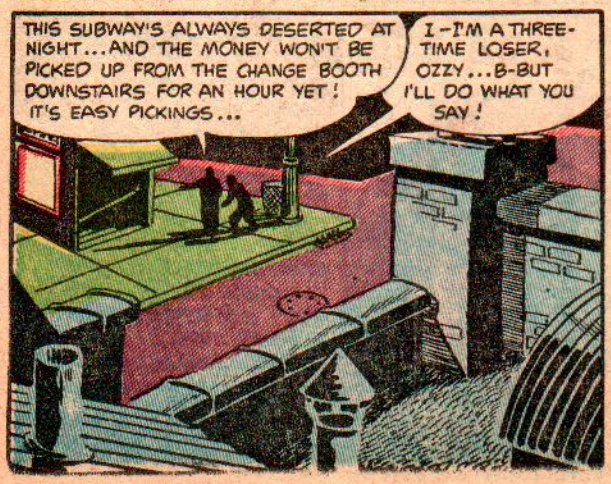
DONALD CORONADO'S SOLUTION TO...

MOMENT of DECISION!



TIM FENWICK WAS A THREE-TIME LOSER WHOSE NEXT ARREST MEANT LIFE IMPRISONMENT. BUT THERE WAS ONLY ONE WAY TO PAY OFF HIS DEBT TO RUTHLESS OZZY STARK---A PATH THAT LED TO ROBBERY AND MURDER! FLEEING FROM THE SCENE OF THE CRIME, HIS POCKETS BULGING WITH LOOT, TIM RESOLVED TO TAKE A RUN-OUT POWDER ON OZZY. BUT HIS PLAN OF ESCAPE FROM POLICE AND BRUTAL PURSUER BACKFIRED. AND TIM FENWICK FACED A... *MOMENT OF DECISION!*

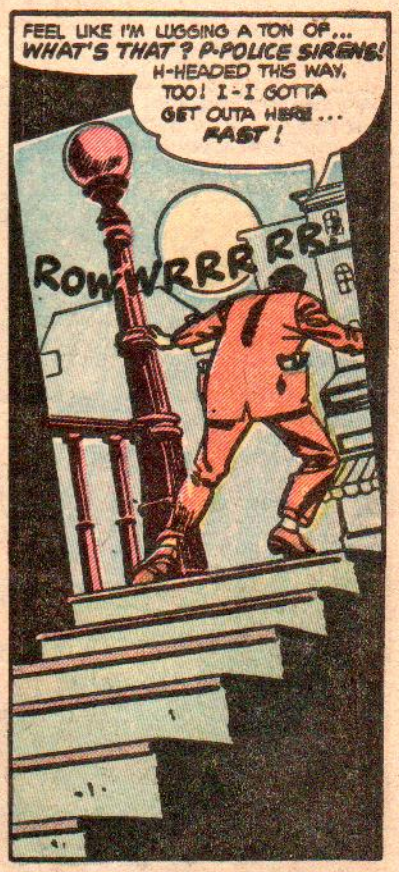




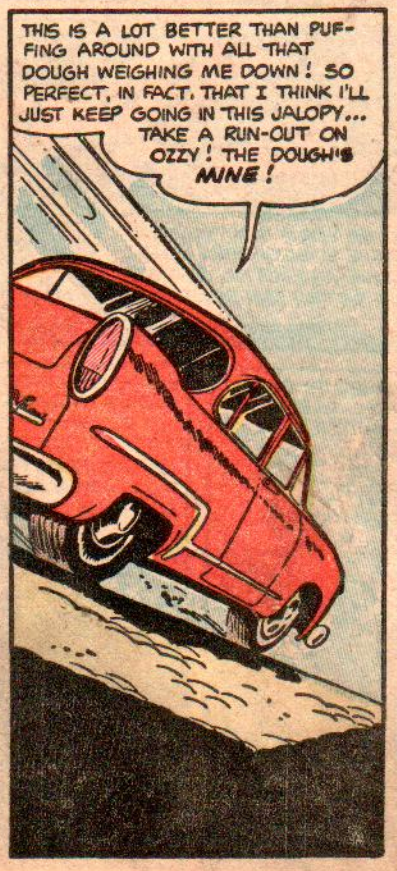
QUAKING WITH FEAR, TIM FENWICK DESCENDS THE STAIRS. SEEING THAT THE PLATFORM IS DESERTED, HE USES THE GUN HANDED TO HIM BY OZZY STARK...

T-TAKE THE SACKS...THEY'RE LOADED WITH COINS! MUST BE HUNDREDS OF DOLLARS HERE! J-JUST DON'T... ARGHHHH!
BAM! BAM!
I'M IN CHARGE HERE, SEE? WE'LL RUN IT MY WAY...AND I DON'T LIKE WITNESSES! SO LONG, GRANDPA... AND THANKS!

THIS STUFF...UGH...IS HEAVY! CAN HARDLY MOVE WITH IT...BUT I AIN'T GOT NO CHOICE! HUNDREDS OF DOLLARS, HE SAID! ENOUGH TO PAY OFF OZZY...AND START A BANKROLL OF MY OWN! NOW TO SCRAM!

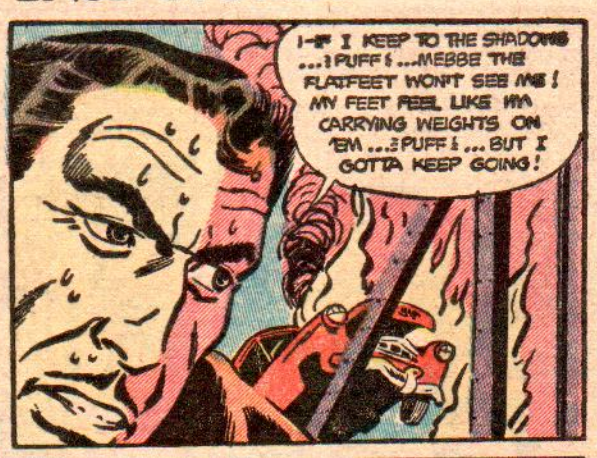

FEEL LIKE I'M LUGGING A TON OF... WHAT'S THAT? P-POLICE SIRENS! H-HEADED THIS WAY, TOO! I-I GOTTA GET OUTA HERE... FAST!
ROW WRRRRR!

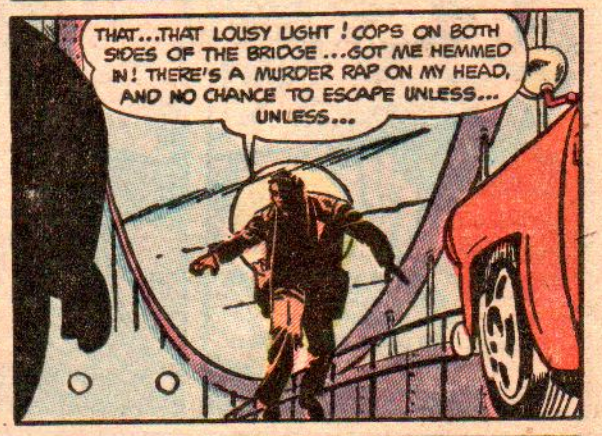
GET ON THE FLOOR IN BACK, BOTH OF YOU! I'M BORROWING THIS CAR FOR AWHILE! ONE SQUAWK AND YOU'RE BOTH PFFFT!
D-DO AS HE SAYS, HONEY! I-I DON'T LIKE THE LOOK IN HIS EYES!


THIS IS A LOT BETTER THAN PUFFING AROUND WITH ALL THAT DOUGH WEIGHING ME DOWN! SO PERFECT, IN FACT, THAT I THINK I'LL JUST KEEP GOING IN THIS JALOPY... TAKE A RUN-OUT ON OZZY! THE DOUGH'S MINE!

T-THE COPS...THEY'RE ON MY TAIL AGAIN! SQUAD CARS CLOSE... GOTTA GIVE THIS HEAP ALL THE JUICE IT CAN TAKE! M-MY BEST CHANCE IS THAT BRIDGE DEAD-AHEAD...GOTTA RUN FOR IT!

UP THE RAMP TOWARD THE BRIDGE TIM FENWICK SPED. THEN....
IT'S HEADED STRAIGHT FOR THAT PILLAR! MEBBE IN THE CONFUSION I CAN MAKE MY GETAWAY! HERE GOES...


I-IF I KEEP TO THE SHADOWS ...PUFF! ...MEBBE THE FLATFEET WON'T SEE ME! MY FEET FEEL LIKE I'M CARRYING WEIGHTS ON 'EM ...PUFF! ... BUT I GOTTA KEEP GOING!


THAT...THAT LOUSY LIGHT! COPS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE BRIDGE ...GOT ME HEMMED IN! THERE'S A MURDER RAP ON MY HEAD, AND NO CHANCE TO ESCAPE UNLESS... UNLESS...

T-THOSE SHADOWS SAVED ME FOR A MINUTE...GAVE ME A CHANCE TO RUN FOR THE EDGE OF THE BRIDGE! WHILE THE COPS'RE LOOKING AROUND I'LL JUST GO OVER THE SIDE...IT CAN'T BE TOO FAR DOWN TO THE RIVER!

T-THEY'LL NEVER FIND ME NOW! ALL I NEED TO DO IS ....UNGHHH! T-THE BAGS OF MONEY...GLBBB... PULLING ME DOWN! D-DRAGGING ME UNDER... LIKE...QUICKSAND!

IN THE CONFUSION CAUSED BY THE WRECKED CAR, TIM FENWICK MADE HIS ESCAPE UNNOTICED. A FEW MINUTES LATER...
THAT'S QUEER! HE WAS HERE A SECOND AGO! THEN ALL OF A SUDDEN...GONE!
IF HE'D GONE OVER THE SIDE WE'D HAVE SEEN HIM BY THIS TIME! HE JUST VANISHED LIKE A GHOST!
THE END

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CASE NO. 3. Male, aged 23 years. BED-WETTING since birth. Many forms of treatment failed. Unable to accept invitation to sleep out over-night. Recently married, and embarrassed by habit. After formula taken, wet bed the first two nights but never since that time.

CASE NO. 4. Girl, aged 6 years. Wet bed since infancy. Nervous, irritable. DRY-TABS formula administered for regular period. BED-WETTING stopped almost immediately. Slight relapse. Formula administered again. Child responded immediately once more, and history reveals no further relapse.

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WHY endure the needless shame, embarrassment, humiliation . . . the discomfort and distress of this unfortunate habit? Why put up with the daily nuisance of changing and washing bed linen and clothes? Wh, suffer the mortification of foul smelling bedrooms . . . the expense of ruined furniture . . . the danger of catching cold and infectious rashes?

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The discoveries of science, many times, are brought about by indirect means. Take the case of the exclusive DRY-TABS formula. Medical practitioners chanced upon this formula while they were investigating a remedy for another illness. Noting the remarkable effect that this formula had upon BED-WETTING they concentrated their efforts on this new data and developed the formula to its present state of perfection. The result is the new DRY-TABS, a remarkable tablet that has brought new hope to thousands of tormented victims of BED-WETTING. Before this formula was released to the public, it was tested in clinics and hospitals by medical scientists on controlled groups of patients. The DRY-TABS formula is the result of thorough medical research, the same kind of research and care that is given to any product that is to be placed in the hands of the public. Chalk up BED-WETTING as one more ailment that has been conquered by the men of science. Think of it, no expensive electrical devices, cumbersome rubber sheets, special diets or mechanical alarms. Just a wonderful new tablet . . . DRY-TABS . . . product of medical research . . . offering the hope of a new future for all these sufferers of BED-WETTING. Be sure to order DRY-TABS today!

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Scientific tests actually prove DRY-TABS to be 75% effective in stopping this unfortunate habit—even after years of torment! Ends the constant worry of overnight hotel stops and fear of public embarrassment while napping on trains and buses. Don't wait another day. If your loved ones suffer the humiliation, the disgrace, insecurity and helplessness only BED-WETTING can cause, order DRY-TABS NOW! Easy to take, can be dissolved in water if necessary. Just follow simple directions.

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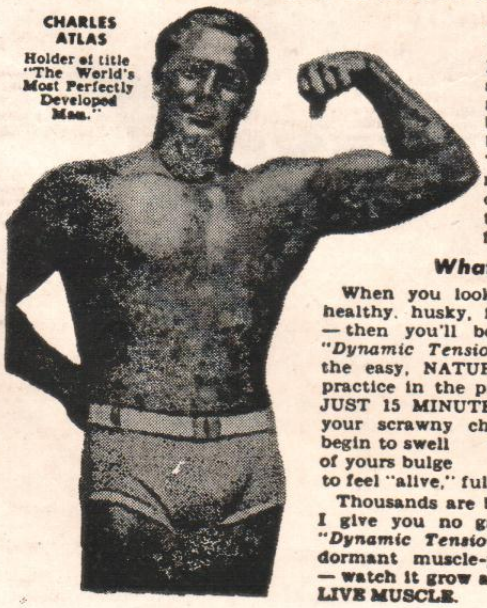

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